



















RAYMOND POINCARÉ



# A HISTORY OF THE THIRD FRENCH REPUBLIC

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



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TO  
MY WIFE





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# A HISTORY OF THE THIRD FRENCH REPUBLIC

## CHAPTER I

### THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE FRANCO- PRUSSIAN WAR

Two men were largely responsible, each in his own way, for the third French Republic, Napoleon III and Bismarck. The one, endeavoring partly at his wife's instigation to renew the prestige of a weakening Empire, and the other, furthering the ambitions of the Prussian Kingdom, set in motion the forces which culminated in the Fourth of September.

The causes of the downfall of the Empire can be traced back several years. Napoleon III was, at heart, a man of peace and had, in all sincerity, soon after his accession, uttered the famous saying: "L'empire, c'est la paix." But the military glamour of the Napoleonic name led the nephew, like the uncle, into repeated wars. These had, in most cases, been successful, exceptions, such as the unfortunate Mexican expedition, seeming negligible. They had

sometimes even resulted in territorial aggrandizement. Napoleon III was, therefore, desirous of establishing once for all the so-called "natural" frontiers of France along the Rhine by the annexation of those Rhenish provinces which, during the First Empire and before, had for a score of years been part of the French nation.

On the other hand, though France was still considered the leading continental power, and though its military superiority seemed unsailable, the imperial régime was unquestionably growing "stale." The Emperor himself, always a mystical fatalist rather than the hewer of his own fortune, felt the growing inertia of his final malady. A lavishly luxurious court had been imitated by a pleasure-loving capital. This had brought in its train relaxed standards of governmental morals and had seriously weakened the fibre of many military commanders. Outwardly the Empire seemed as glorious as ever, and in 1867 France invited the world to a gorgeous exposition in the "Ville-lumière." But Paris was more emotional year by year, and the Tuileries and Saint-Cloud were dominated by a narrow-

mind and spoiled Empress. Court intrigues were rife and drawing-room generals were to be found in real life, as well as in Offenbach's "Grande Duchesse." But nobody, except perhaps Napoleon himself, realized how the Empire had declined. The Empress merely felt that it was time to do something stirring, and, without necessarily waging war, to assert again the pre-eminence in Europe of France, weakened in 1866 by the unexpected outcome of the rivalry between Austria and Prussia for preponderance among the German States.

Beyond the eastern frontier of France a nation was growing in ambition and power. Prussia still remembered the warlike achievements of Frederick the Great, although since those days its military efficiency had at times undergone a decline. But now, under the reign of King William, guided by a vigorous minister, Bismarck, an example, whatever his admirers may say, of the brutal and unscrupulous *Junker*, the Prussian Government had for some time tried to impose its leadership on the other German States. Some of these were far from anxious to accept it. In the furtherance of Prussian schemes, Bismarck had been able to

inflict a diplomatic rebuff on Napoleon, as well as a severe military defeat on Austria.

In 1866, Prussia won from Austria the important victory of Königgrätz or Sadowa, and thereby asserted its leadership. The outcome was a check to Napoleon, who had expected a different result. Moreover, by it Bismarck was encouraged to pursue his plans for the consolidation of Germany under a still more openly acknowledged Prussian supremacy. A crafty and utterly unscrupulous diplomat, he was able to mislead Napoleon and his unskilful ministers.

Soon after Sadowa the Emperor tried to obtain territorial compensation from Prussia. He wished, in return for recognition of Prussia's new position and of the projected union of North and South Germany minus Austria, to obtain the cession of territories on the left bank of the Rhine, or an alliance for the conquest and annexation of Belgium to France. Such schemes having failed, Napoleon tried next to satisfy French jingoism by the acquisition of the Duchy of Luxembourg. This move resulted only in securing the evacuation by its Prussian garrison of the Luxembourg fortress



and the neutralization of the duchy. From that time on, tension increased between France and Prussia. Bismarck was, indeed, more anxious for war than Napoleon. He suspected the weakness of the French Empire, he despised its leaders, he realized the advance in military efficiency of his own country, and his aim was unswerving to establish a Prussianized German Empire at the cost, if possible, of the downfall of France. As a matter of fact, France, as now, was far from being permeated with militarism and, a few months before the war in 1870, the military budget was actually reduced.

The occasion for a dispute arrived with the suggested candidacy of Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, a German prince related to the King of Prussia, to the crown of Spain. As early as 1868, intrigues had begun to put a Prussian on the Spanish throne, but Napoleon had not as yet been disturbed. It was not until 1870 that he took the matter seriously. In July, Prince Leopold accepted the crown, egged on by Bismarck, and with the fiction of the approval of King William as head of the Hohenzollerns, as distinguished from his position as King of Prussia.

At that time the French Emperor was in precarious health and scarcely in full control of his powers. The French people at large were pacifically inclined and would have asked for nothing better than to remain at home instead of fighting about a foreigner's candidacy to an alien throne. But, unfortunately, the Empress Eugénie was for war. The Government, too, was in the hands of second-rate and hesitating diplomats. Emile Ollivier, the chief of the Cabinet, was an orator more than a statesman, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the duc de Gramont, was a conceited mediocrity more and more involved in his own mistakes. In consequence, the attitude of the Government was not so much deliberate desire for war as provocative bluster, of which Bismarck was quick to take advantage. The Cabinet was egged on by Eugénie's adherents, the militants, who had been looking for an insult since Sadowa, and by obstreperous journalists and noisy boulevard mobs, whose manifestations were unfortunately taken, even by the Corps législatif, for the voice of France.

In consequence, blunder after blunder was made. The ministers worked at cross-purposes,

without due consultation and without consideration of the effect of their actions on an inflamed public opinion or on prospective European alliances. Stated in terms of diplomatic procedure, the aim of the French Cabinet was to humiliate Prussia by forcing its Government to acknowledge a retreat. King William was not seeking war and was probably willing to make honorable concessions. Bismarck, on the contrary, desired war, if it could be under favorable diplomatic auspices, and the Hohenzollern candidacy was a direct provocation. He wanted France to seem the aggressor, in view of the effect both on neutral Europe, and particularly on the South German States, which he wished to draw into alliance under the menace of French attack.

The French Ambassador to the King of Prussia, Benedetti, was instructed to demand the withdrawal of Prince Leopold's candidacy. This demand followed a very arrogant statement to the Corps législatif, on July 6, by the duc de Gramont. The assumption was that Prince Leopold's presence on the Spanish throne would be dangerous to the honor and interests of France, by exposing the country

on two sides to Prussian influence. King William was, on the whole, willing to make a concession to avoid international complications, but he obviously wished not to appear to act under pressure. M. Benedetti went to Ems and, on July 9, he laid the French demands before the King. After long-drawn-out discussion the French Government asked for a categorical reply by July 12. On that day the father of Prince Leopold, Prince Antony of Hohenzollern, in a telegram to Spain, formally withdrew his son's name. The King had planned to give his consent to this apparently *spontaneous* action on the part of the candidate's family, when officially informed. Thus France would obtain its ends and the King himself would not be involved.

Unfortunately the thoughtlessness of the head of the French Ministry spoiled everything. Instead of waiting a day for the King's ratification, Emile Ollivier, desirous also of peace, hastened to make public the telegram from the Prince of Hohenzollern. Thereupon the leaders of the war party in the Corps législatif at once pointed out that the telegram was not accompanied by the signature of the Prus-



sian monarch, declared that the Cabinet had been outwitted, and clamored for definite guarantees. Stung by the charge of inefficiency, the would-be statesman Gramont immediately accentuated his stipulations and demanded that the King of Prussia guarantee not to support in future the candidacy of a Hohenzollern to the Spanish throne.

Matters were rapidly reaching an *impasse*, and Bismarck was correspondingly elated, because France was appearing to Europe a trouble-maker. The duc de Gramont and Emile Ollivier committed the error of dictating a letter to the Prussian Ambassador for him to transmit to the King, to be in turn sent back as his reply. King William was offended by this high-handed procedure. He had already told comte Benedetti at Ems that a satisfactory letter was on its way from Prince Antony and had promised him another interview upon its arrival. After receiving the dispatch from his ambassador at Paris communicating Gramont's formulas, he sent word to Benedetti that Prince Leopold was no longer a candidate and that the incident was closed. Nor was the King willing to grant

Benedetti's urgent requests for an interview (July 13).

The King and the French Ambassador had remained perfectly courteous, and the next day, at the railway station, they took leave of each other with marks of respect. Things were not yet hopeless, until Bismarck, by a trick of which he afterwards bragged, caused a dispatch to be published implying that Benedetti had been so persistent in pushing his demands that King William had been obliged to snub him. The French were led to believe that their representative had been insulted, and neutrals sided with Prussia as the aggrieved party. After deliberation the French Ministry decided on war and the decision was blindly ratified by the Corps législatif on July 15. At this meeting Emile Ollivier made his famous remark that the Ministry accepted responsibility for the war with a "clear conscience." His actual words, "*le cœur léger*," seemed, however, to imply "with a light heart," and thereafter weighed heavily against him in the minds of Frenchmen.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR — THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

September, 1870, to February, 1871

ON July 19 the French Embassy at Berlin declared a state of war. Paris was wild with enthusiasm and eager for an advance on Berlin. The provinces were for the most part cool, but accepted the war calmly because they were assured of an easy victory. The leaders of the two nations had for each other equal contempt. "Ce n'est pas un homme sérieux," Napoleon had once said of Bismarck, and Bismarck thought Napoleon "stupid and sentimental." Meanwhile each nation had eyes on the territory of the other: France was ready to claim the Rhine frontier; Prussia wanted all it could get, and certainly Alsace and Lorraine. The idea, so often repeated by the Germans since the war, that these provinces were annexed because they had once been German, was not in Bismarck's mind, — "that is a Professor's reason," he said.<sup>1</sup> He wanted Strassburg be-

<sup>1</sup> Moritz Busch, *Bismarck*, vol. I, chap. I.

cause its commanding position and the wedge of Wissembourg could cut off northern from southern Germany. The frontier of the Vosges was as desirable to the Germans as the Rhine to the French.

From the beginning all went wrong in France. The Government found itself left in the lurch by the European states whose alliance it had expected. Moreover, mobilization proceeded slowly and in utter confusion. In spite of Marshal Le Boëuf's famous exclamation ("Il ne manquera pas un bouton de guêtre"), never did a nation enter on a war less prepared than the French. On the other hand, all Germany, well trained and ready, sprang to the side of Prussia. The whole military force was grouped in three armies — under Steinmetz, Prince Frederick Charles, and the Crown Prince. But, meanwhile, it seemed necessary to the French to give a semblance of military achievement. The Emperor had started from Paris on July 28 leaving the Empress as regent. On August 2, a vain military display with largely superior forces was made across the frontier at Saarbrücken, a practically unprotected place was taken, and the Emperor was



able to send home word that the Prince Imperial had received his "baptism of fire" and that the soldiers wept at seeing him calmly pick up a bullet. The same day King William took command of the German forces at Mainz, and on August 4 the army of the Crown Prince entered Alsace and defeated at Wissembourg the division of about twelve thousand men of General Abel Douay, who was killed. On the 6th Mac-Mahon, with a larger force, met the still more numerous Germans somewhat farther back at Wörth, Fröschwiller, and Reichsoffen, and was utterly routed with a loss of over ten thousand in killed, wounded, and taken. Alsace was thus completely exposed to the enemy, and the road was open to Lunéville and Nancy. On the same day, German armies under Steinmetz and Prince Frederick Charles crossed into Lorraine at Saarbrücken and engaged the troops of the French general Frossard at Forbach and Spicheren, inflicting on them a severe repulse. Meanwhile Frossard's superior, Bazaine, though not far away, did not move a finger to help him. "If Frossard wanted the baton of marshal of France he could win it alone."

The news of these disasters was a terrible shock to Paris. The "liberal" Ollivier Cabinet was overthrown and replaced by a reactionary one led by General Cousin-Montauban, comte de Palikao. The Emperor withdrew from military leadership and Marshal Bazaine received supreme command. Bazaine was a brave soldier, but a poor general-in-chief, and withal a self-seeking man, incompetent to deal with the difficulties in which France found itself. He was perhaps not a conscious traitor in the great disaster which soon came to pass, but he thought more of himself than of his country. At the time we are concerned with he was considered the coming man. Meanwhile MacMahon, cut off from Bazaine's main army, fell back, between August 6 and August 17, to Châlons. Bazaine was apparently without intelligent strategic plans. He professed to be desirous of concentrating at Verdun, but was afraid to get out of reach of Metz. He won first an indecisive battle at Borny (August 14), which was unproductive of any concrete advantage. On August 16, he let himself be turned back, by an enemy only half as numerous, at Rezonville (Vionville, Mars-la-Tour).

On the 18th, he encountered, on the contrary, a much larger force at Saint-Privat (Gravelotte) and let himself be cooped up in Metz. Critics of Bazaine say that he could have turned both Rezonville and Gravelotte to the advantage of the French.

The familiar military uncertainties now began to show themselves in the movements of Mac-Mahon and his troops. The armies of Steinmetz and of Frederick Charles were united under command of the latter to beleague Metz, and a smaller force under Prince Albert of Saxony was thrown off to coöperate with the army of the Crown Prince in its advance on Paris. Mac-Mahon had collected about one hundred and twenty thousand men, and Napoleon, without real authority except as a meddler, was with him. The plan was originally to fall back for the protection of Paris, but the Empress-Regent was afraid to have a defeated Emperor return to the capital lest revolution ensue, and Palikao<sup>r</sup> urged a swift advance to rescue Metz, crushing Prince Albert of Saxony on the way, taking Frederick Charles between the two fires of rescuers and besieged, with the Crown Prince still too

far away to be dangerous. Meanwhile Mac-Mahon moved to Reims, which was neither on the direct road to Paris nor to Metz, and at last started to the rescue of Bazaine by the roundabout route of Montmédy, continually hesitating and retracing his steps. On receiving news of his progress, the armies of the Crown Prince and of Prince Albert converged northward. Mac-Mahon's right wing, under General de Failly, was surprised at Beaumont, and finally the French army in disorder drew up in most unfavorable positions between the Meuse and the Belgian frontier, to face a foe twice as numerous and already nearly completely surrounding it. The battle of Sedan broke out on September 1. Mac-Mahon was wounded early in the fight and gave over the command to Ducrot, in turn superseded by Wimpffen, already designated by the Ministry to replace Mac-Mahon in case of accident. After a fierce battle it fell to General de Wimpffen to capitulate on September 2. By the disaster of Sedan the Germans captured the Emperor, a marshal of France, and the whole of one of its two armies.

The news of the overwhelming defeat of



Sedan struck Paris like a thunderbolt. Jules Favre proposed to the Corps législatif the overthrow of Napoleon and of his dynasty; Thiers, who favored the restoration of the Orléans family, wished the convocation of a Constituent Assembly; the comte de Palikao asked for a provisional governing commission of which he should be the lieutenant-general. But, before anything was done, the Paris mob invaded the legislative chamber. Gambetta, with the majority of the Paris Deputies, went to the Hôtel de Ville, and to prevent a more radical set from seizing the Government, proclaimed the Republic (September 4). A Government of National Defence was constituted of which General Trochu became President, Jules Favre Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Gambetta Minister of the Interior. Thiers was not a member, but gave his support. Eugénie escaped from the Tuileries to the home of her American dentist, Dr. Evans, and then fled to England.

Jules Favre was innocent enough to think that the Germans would be satisfied with the overthrow of Napoleon, and he was rash enough to declare that France would not yield

“an inch of its territory or a stone of its fortresses.” But, in an interview with Bismarck at Ferrières, on September 19, he realized the oppressiveness of the German demands. The rhetorical and emotional, even tearful, Jules Favre was faced by a harsh and unrelenting conqueror, and the meeting ended without an agreement. Meanwhile Paris was invested by the German forces of the Crown Prince and the Prince of Saxony after a defeat of some French troops at Châtillon. William, Bismarck, and Moltke took up their station at Versailles. Europe, made suspicious by the numerous changes of government in France in the nineteenth century, and moved also by selfish reasons, refused its aid and looked on with indifference. Thiers made a fruitless quest through Europe for practical aid, bringing home only meaningless expressions of sympathy.

Unfortunately even a number of people in the provinces, relaxed by the factitious prosperity of the imperial régime, were too willing to yield to the invaders. Where resistance was brave it appeared fruitless: Strassburg capitulated on September 28, after the Germans

had burned its library and bombarded the cathedral. A scratch army on the Loire, under La Motterouge, was beaten at Artenay (October 10) and had to evacuate Orléans. On October 18, the Germans captured Châteaudun after heroic resistance by National Guards and sharpshooters.

Though one of the two great French armies was in captivity and the other besieged in Metz, the idea of submission never for a moment entered Gambetta's head. Paris was under the command of Trochu, patriotic and brave, but military critic rather than leader, discouraged from the beginning, and unable to take advantage of opportunities. A delegation of the Government of National Defence had established itself at Tours to avoid the German besiegers, but two of its members, Crémieux and Glais-Bizoin, were elderly and weak. Admiral Fourichon was the most competent. Gambetta escaped from Paris by balloon on October 7, and, reaching Tours in safety, made himself by his energy and patriotic inspiration, practically dictator and organizer of resistance to the invaders.

Léon Gambetta, a young lawyer politician

of thirty-two, of inexhaustible energy and impassioned eloquence, was the son of an Italian grocer settled at Cahors. With the help of his assistant Charles de Freycinet, he levied and armed in four months six hundred thousand men, an average of five thousand a day. Everything was done in haste and unsatisfactorily, — the army of General Chanzy was equipped with guns of fifteen different patterns. But Gambetta did the task of a giant, in spite of another crushing blow to France, the surrender of Metz.

Bazaine had let himself be cooped up in Metz. Instead of being moved by patriotism, he thought only of his own interests and ambitions. In the midst of the cataclysm which had fallen on France he aspired to hold the position of power. The Emperor gone and the Republic destined, Bazaine thought, to fall, he would be left at the head of the only army. His would be the task of treating for peace with Germany, and then he would perhaps become in France regent instead of the Empress, or Marshal-Lieutenant of the Empire, like the Spanish marshals. So he neglected favorable military opportunities, and dallied over



plans of peace, while Bismarck misled him with fruitless propositions or false emissaries like the adventurer Regnier. Finally, on October 27, Bazaine had to surrender Metz, with three marshals (himself, Canrobert, and Le Bœuf), sixty generals, six thousand officers, and one hundred and seventy-three thousand men. France was deprived of her last trained forces, and the besieging army of Frederick Charles was set free to help in the conquest of France. After the war Bazaine was condemned to death, by court-martial, for treason. His sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, but he afterwards escaped from the fortress in which he was confined and died in obscurity and disgrace at Madrid.

No sooner did the news of the capitulation of Metz reach Paris than a regrettable affair took place. There was much dissatisfaction with the indecision of the Provisional Government, and, on October 31, a mob invaded the Hôtel de Ville and arrested the chief members of the commission. Fortunately they were released later the same day and a plebiscite of November 3 confirmed the powers of the Government of National Defence. Fortunately,

too, within a few days came news of the first real success of the French during the war, the battle of Coulmiers (November 9).

Gambetta had succeeded during October in organizing the Army of the Loire which, under General d'Aurelle de Paladines, defeated the Bavarian forces of von der Thann at Coulmiers and recaptured Orléans. The plan was to push on to Paris and the objections of d'Aurelle were overcome by Gambetta. But the fall of Metz had released German reinforcements. After an unsuccessful contest by the right wing at Beaune-la-Rolande (November 28), and a partial victory at Villepion, the French were defeated in turn on December 2 at Loigny or Patay (left wing), on December 3 at Artenay. The Germans reoccupied Orléans and the first Army of the Loire was dispersed. The Government moved from Tours to Bordeaux.

After Coulmiers General Trochu had planned a sortie from Paris to meet the Army of the Loire. This advance was under command of General Ducrot, but was delayed by trouble with pontoon bridges. The various battles of the Marne (November 30–Decem-

ber 2) culminated in the terrible fight and repulse of Villiers and Champaign. In the north, a small army hastily brought together under temporary command of General Favre was defeated at Villers-Bretonneux and Amiens (November 27).

The last phase of the Franco-Prussian War begins with the crushing of the Army of the Loire and the check of the advance to Champaign. With unwearied tenacity Gambetta tried to reorganize the Army of the Loire. A portion became the second Army of the Loire or of the West, under Chanzy. The rest, under Bourbaki, became the Army of the East. Faidherbe tried to revive the Army of the North.

To Chanzy, on the whole the most capable French general of the war, was assigned the task of trying, with a smaller force, what d'Aurelle had already failed in accomplishing, a drive on Paris. In this task Bourbaki and Faidherbe were expected by Gambetta to coöperate. Instead of succeeding, Chanzy, bravely fighting, was driven back, first down the Loire, in the long-contested battle of Josnes (Villorceau or Beaugency) (December 7-10),

then up the valley of the tributary Loir to Vendôme and Le Mans. There the army, reduced almost to a mob, made a new stand. In a battle between January 10 and 12, this army was again routed and what was left thrown back to Laval.

Faidherbe, taking the offensive in the north, fought an indecisive contest at Pont-Noyelles (December 23) and took Bapaume (January 3). But his endeavor to proceed to the assistance of Paris was frustrated, he was unable to relieve Péronne, which fell on January 9, and was defeated at Saint-Quentin on January 19.

Bourbaki, in spite of his reputation, showed himself inferior to Chanzy and Faidherbe. He let his army lose morale by his hesitation, and then accepted with satisfaction Freycinet's plan to move east upon Germany instead of to the rescue of Paris. On the eastern frontier Colonel Denfert-Rochereau was tenaciously holding Belfort, which was never captured by the Germans during the whole war.<sup>1</sup> Bourbaki's dishearteningly slow progress received no effective assistance from Garibaldi. This

<sup>1</sup> He surrendered by order of the Government. The isolated incident of the resistance of the town of Bitche through all the war is no less noteworthy.



Italian soldier of fortune, now somewhat in his decline, had offered his services to France and was in command of a small body of guerillas and sharpshooters, the Army of the Vosges. With alternate periods of inactivity, failure, and success, Garibaldi perhaps did more harm than good to France. He monopolized the services of several thousand men, and yet, through his prestige as a distinguished foreign volunteer, he could not be brought under control. Bourbaki won the battle of Villersexel on January 9. Pushing on to Belfort he was defeated only a few miles from the town in the battle of Héricourt, or Montbéliard, along the river Lisaine. The army, now transformed into panic-stricken fugitives, made its way painfully through bitter cold and snow, and Bourbaki tried to commit suicide. He was succeeded by General Clinchant. When Paris capitulated, on January 28, and an armistice was signed, this Army of the East was omitted. Jules Favre at Paris failed to notify Gambetta in the provinces of this exception, and the army, hearing of the armistice, ceased its flight, only to be relentlessly followed by the Germans. Finally, on February 1, the rem-

nants of the army fled across the Swiss frontier and found safety on neutral soil.

Meanwhile, in Paris the tightening of the Prussian lines had made the food problem more and more difficult, and the population were reduced to small rations and unpalatable diet. After Champigny the German general von Moltke communicated with the besieged, informing them of the defeat of Orléans, and the means seemed opened for negotiations. But the opportunity was rejected, and the Government even refused to be represented at an international conference, then opening in London, because of its unwillingness to apply to Bismarck for a safe-conduct for its representative. A chance to bring the condition of France before the Powers was neglected. Between December 21 and 26, a sally to Le Bourget was driven back, and, on the next day, the bombardment of the forts began. On January 5, the Prussian batteries opened fire on the city itself. On January 18, the Germans took a spectacular revenge for the conquests of Louis XIV by the coronation of King William of Prussia as Emperor of the united German people. The ceremony took place in

the great Galerie des Glaces of Louis's magnificent palace of Versailles. The very next day the triumph of the Germans received its consecration, not only by the battle of Saint-Quentin (already mentioned), but by the repulse of the last offensive movement from Paris. To placate the Paris population an advance was made on Versailles with battalions largely composed of National Guards. At Montretout and Buzenval they were routed and driven back in a panic to Paris. General Trochu was forced to resign the military governorship of Paris, though by a strange contradiction he kept the presidency of the Government of National Defence, and was replaced by General Vinoy. On January 22, a riot broke out in the capital in which blood was shed in civil strife. Finally, on January 28, Jules Favre had to submit to the conqueror's terms. Paris capitulated and the garrison was disarmed, with the exception of a few thousand regulars to preserve order, and the National Guard; a war tribute was imposed on the city and an armistice of twenty-one days was signed to permit the election and gathering of a National Assembly to pass on terms

of peace. With inexcusable carelessness Jules Favre neglected to warn Gambetta in the provinces that this armistice began for the rest of France only on the thirty-first and that, as already stated, the Army of the East was excepted from its provisions.

Gambetta was furious at the surrender and at the presumption of Paris to decide for the provinces. He preached a continuation of the war, and the intervention of Bismarck was necessary to prevent him from excluding from the National Assembly all who had had any connection with the imperial régime. Jules Simon was sent from Paris to counteract Gambetta's efforts. The latter yielded before the prospect of civil war, withdrew from power, and, on February 8, elections were held for the National Assembly.

The downfall of what had been considered the chief military nation of Europe was due to many involved causes. The Empire was responsible for the *débâcle* and the Government of National Defence was unable to create everything out of nothing. Many people were ready to be discouraged after a first defeat, and few realized what Germany's de-



mands were going to be. The imperial army was insufficiently equipped and the majority of its generals were inefficient and lacking in initiative: there was no preparation, no system, little discipline.

During the period of National Defence the members of the Government themselves were usually wanting in experience and in diplomacy, and the badly trained armies made up of raw recruits were liable to panics or unable to follow up an advantage. There was jealousy, mistrust, and frequent unwillingness to subordinate politics to patriotism, or, at any rate, to make allowances for other forms of patriotism than one's own. Gambetta and Jules Favre were primarily orators and tribunes and indulged in too many wordy proclamations, in which habit they were followed by General Trochu. The patriotism and enthusiasm of Gambetta were undeniable, but he was imbued with the principles and memories of the French Revolution, including the efficacy of national volunteers, the ability of France to resist all Europe, and the subordination of military to civil authority. Consequently, in a time of stress he nagged the gen-

erals and interfered, and gave free rein to Freycinet to do the same. They upset plans made by experienced generals, and sent civilians to spy over them, with power to retire them from command. They were, moreover, trying to thrust a republic down the throats of a hostile majority of the population, for a large proportion of those not Bonapartists were in favor of a monarchy. The wonder is, therefore, that France was able to do so much. M. de Freycinet was not boasting when he wrote later, "Alone, without allies, without leaders, without an army, deprived for the first time of communication with its capital, it resisted for five months, with improvised resources, a formidable enemy that the regular armies of the Empire, though made up of heroic soldiers, had not been able to hold back five weeks."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *La guerre en province*, quoted by Welschinger, *La guerre de 1870*, vol. II, p. 295.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ADMINISTRATION OF ADOLPHE THIERS

February, 1871, to May, 1873

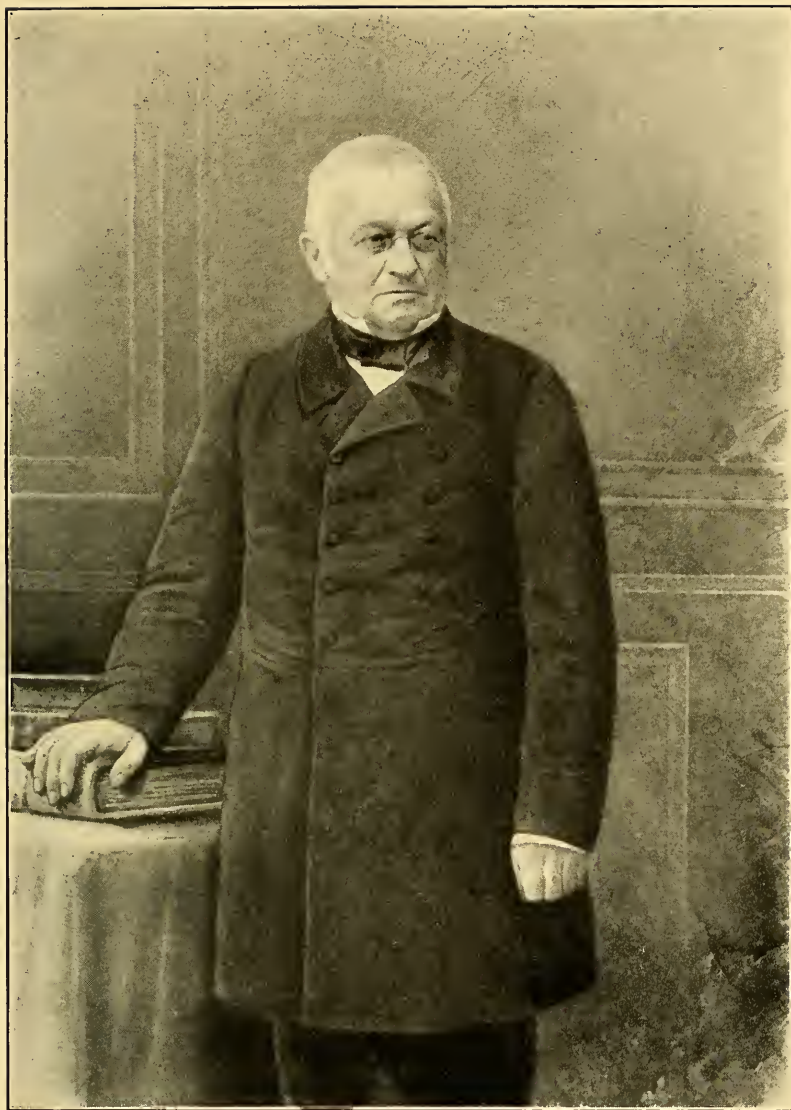
THE elections were held in hot haste. The short time allowed before the convening of the Assembly made the usual campaign impossible. It met at Bordeaux on February 13, 1871. The peace party was in very considerable majority, and though Gambetta received the distinction of a multiple election in nine separate districts, Thiers was chosen in twenty-six. The radicals and advocates of guerilla warfare and of a "guerre à outrance" found themselves few in numbers. Many of the representatives had only local or rural reputation. They were new to parliamentary life, and in the majority of cases were averse to a permanent republican form of government. They would have preferred a monarchy, but they were ready to accept a provisional republic which would incur the task of settling the war with Germany and bear the onus of defeat. They were especially suspicious of

Paris, and hostile to it as the home of fickleness, of irresponsibility, and of mob rule. They were largely provincial lawyers and rural landed gentry, conservative and clerical, who felt that too much importance had been usurped by the Parisian Government of National Defence.

The new Assembly, therefore, gradually fell into several groups. On the conservative side came the Extreme Right, made up of out-and-out Legitimists, believing in absolutism and the divine right of kings; the Right, composed of monarchists desirous of conciliating the old régime with the demands of modern times and of making it a practical form of government; the Right Centre, consisting of constitutional monarchists and followers of the Orléans branch of the house of Bourbon. Among the anti-republicans the Bonapartists were almost negligible. Next came the Left Centre of conservative Republicans, the republican Left, and the radical Union républicaine, partisans of Gambetta and advanced "reformers."

At the first public session of the Assembly Jules Grévy was chosen presiding officer. A





ADOLPHE THIERS



former leader of the opposition to the Empire, he had not participated in affairs since the Fourth of September, and, therefore, had not yet identified himself with any set. Among the Republicans he was averse to Gambetta and remained so even when the latter became moderate. On February 17, Adolphe Thiers, the "peace-maker," was by an almost unanimous vote elected "Chief of the Executive Power of the French Republic." It was he who, thirty years before, had fortified Paris that had now fallen only by famine, who had opposed the war when it might yet have been averted, who had travelled over Europe to defend the interests of France, who had been elected representative by the choice of twenty-six departments.

M. Thiers formed a coalition cabinet representing different shades of political feeling, and in one of his early speeches, on March 10, he formulated a plan of party truce for the purpose of national reorganization. This plan was acquiesced in by the Assembly and bears in history the name of the Compact of Bordeaux (*pacte de Bordeaux*). France was to continue under a republican government, without

injury to the later claims of any party. Thiers, himself, as a former Orléanist, advocated, at least in his relations with the monarchists, a Restoration, with the *sine qua non* that an attempt should be made at a fusion of the Legitimists and the Orléanists. Meanwhile he was the chief executive official of a republic.

But, even before the formulation of the truce of parties, Thiers was in eager haste to settle the terms of peace with Germany before the expiration of the armistice. The preliminaries were discussed between Thiers and Bismarck at Versailles. The Germans were almost as anxious as the French to see the end of the war, and the objections and delays of Bismarck were partly tactical. Brief successive prolongations of the armistice were obtained, and finally the preliminaries were signed on February 26. Thiers made herculean efforts to keep for France Belfort, which Bismarck claimed, and finally succeeded on condition that the German army should occupy Paris from March 1 to the ratification of the preliminaries by the Assembly. France was to give up Alsace and a part of Lorraine, including Metz, and pay an indemnity of five

billion francs. German troops were to occupy the conquered districts and evacuate them progressively as the indemnity was paid. The peace discussions afterwards continued at Brussels, and the final treaty was signed at Frankfort on May 10, 1871.

No sooner were the preliminaries signed than Thiers returned post-haste to Bordeaux, and obtained an almost immediate assent (March 1), so that the Germans were obliged to forego a large part of their plans for a triumphal entry into Paris and a review by the Emperor. Only one body of thirty thousand men marched in through one section and, two days later, evacuated the city.

The same meeting which ratified the preliminaries of peace officially proclaimed the expulsion of the imperial dynasty and declared Napoleon III responsible for the invasion, the ruin and dismemberment of France. The same day also beheld the pathetic withdrawal of the representatives of Alsace and of Lorraine, turned over to the conqueror.

The misfortunes of France were far from ended. Paris was soon to break out into rebellion under the eyes of the Germans still in



possession of many of the suburbs. The enemy looked on and saw Frenchman killing Frenchman in civil war.

It had become obvious that the division of administration between Bordeaux and Paris was making government difficult. The Assembly, still suspicious of Paris, decided to transfer its place of meeting to Versailles. But Paris itself was in a state of nervous hysteria as a result of the long and exhausting siege (*fièvre obsidionale*). The Paris proletariat were as jealous and suspicious of the Assembly as the Assembly of them. The suggestion of a transfer to Versailles instead of to Paris seemed a direct challenge. Versailles recalled too easily Louis XIV and the Bourbons. The monarchical sympathies of the Assembly were, moreover, well known, and the Parisians dreaded the restoration of royalty. The people were hungry and penniless, and industry and commerce had almost completely ceased. The city was full, besides, of soldiers disarmed through the armistice and ready for riot. On the other hand, the National Guards, a large body of semi-disciplined militia made up, at least in part, of the dregs of the populace, had

been allowed to retain their weapons, and many of them gave their time to drunkenness, loafing, and listening to agitators. Some rather injudicious condemnations of leaders in the October riots merely aggravated the dissatisfaction. All this led to the Commune.

The leaders of the Commune were, some of them, sincere though visionary reformers, whose hearts rankled at the sufferings of the poor and the inequalities of wealth and privilege. The majority were mischief-makers and café orators, loquacious but incompetent or inexperienced, without definite plans and unfit to be leaders, some vicious and some dishonest. The rank and file soon became a lawless mob, ready to burn and murder, imitating, in their ignorant cult of "liberty," the worst phases of the French Revolution and its Reign of Terror. Still, the Communards have their admirers to-day, and, as the world advances in radicalism, it is not unlikely that the Jacobin Charles Delescluze, the bloodthirsty Raoul Rigault, and the brilliant and scholarly Gustave Flourens will be considered heroic precursors.

The idea of the Commune was decentral-



ization. It was an experiment aiming at a free and autonomous Paris serving as model for the other self-governing communes of France, united merely for their common needs. It amounted almost to the quasi-independence of each separate town. But mixed up with the theorists of the Commune were countless anarchist revolutionaries, followers of the teachings of Blanqui, as well as admirers of the great Revolution which overthrew the old régime, and socialists of various types.

The germs of the movement which was to culminate in the Commune were visible at an early hour. The dissatisfaction of the Radicals with the moderation of the Government of National Defence, the riots of October 31 and January 22 were all symptoms of the discontent of the proletariat. Indeed, the proclamation of the Republic, on September 4, was itself an object lesson in illegality to the malcontents. Organized dissatisfaction began to centre about the obstreperous and disorderly, but armed and now "federated" National Guards. Manifestoes signed by self-appointed committees of plebeian patriots appeared on the walls of Paris. These com-

mittees finally merged into the "Comité central," or were replaced by it. This committee advocated the trial and imprisonment of the members of the Government of National Defence, and protested against the disarmament of the National Guards and the entrance of the Germans into Paris.

The Government was almost helpless. The few regulars left under arms in Paris were of doubtful reliance, and General d'Aurelle de Paladines, now in command of the National Guards, was not obeyed. A certain number of artillery guns in Paris had been paid for by popular subscription, and the rumor spread at one time that these were to be turned over to the Germans. The populace seized them and dragged them to different parts of the city.

The Government decided at last to act boldly and, on March 18, dispatched General Lecomte with some troops to seize the guns at Montmartre. But the mob surrounded the soldiers, and these mutinied and refused to obey orders to fire, and arrested their own commander. Later in the day General Lecomte was shot with General Clément Thomas, a former commander of the National Guard,

who rather thoughtlessly and out of curiosity had mingled with the crowd and was recognized.

Thus armed forces in Paris were in direct rebellion. Other outlying quarters had also sprung into insurrection. M. Thiers, who had recently arrived from Bordeaux, and the chief government officials quartered in Paris, withdrew to Versailles. Paris had to be besieged again and conquered by force of arms.

In Paris the first elections of the Commune were held on March 26. On April 3 an armed sally of the Communards towards Versailles was repulsed with the loss of some of their chief leaders, including Flourens. Meanwhile, the Army of Versailles had been organized and put under the command of Mac-Mahon. Discipline was restored and the advance on Paris began.

As time passed in the besieged city the saner men were swept into the background and reckless counsels prevailed. Some of the military leaders were competent men, such as Cluseret, who had been a general in the American army during the Civil War, or Rossel, a trained officer of engineers. But many were

foreign adventurers and soldiers of fortune: Dombrowski, Wroblewski, La Cecilia. The civil administration grew into a reproduction of the worst phases of the Reign of Terror. Frenzied women egged on destruction and slaughter, and when at last the national troops fought their way into the conquered city, it was amid the flaming ruins of many of its proudest buildings and monuments.

The siege lasted two months. On May 21, the Army of Versailles crossed the fortifications and there followed the "Seven Days' Battle," a street-by-street advance marked by desperate resistance by the Communards and bloodthirsty reprisals by the Versaillais. Civil war is often the most cruel and the Versailles troops, made up in large part of men recently defeated by the Germans, were glad to conquer somebody. Over seventeen thousand were shot down by the victors in this last week. The French to-day are horrified and ashamed at the cruel massacres of both sides and try to forget the Commune. Suffice it here to say that the last serious resistance was made in the cemetery of Père-Lachaise, where those *fédérés* taken arms in hand were lined up



against a wall and shot. Countless others, men, women, and children, herded together in bands, were tried summarily and either executed, imprisoned, or deported thousands of miles away to New Caledonia, until, years after, in 1879 and 1880, the pacification of resentments brought amnesty to the survivors.<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately, M. Thiers had more inspiring tasks to deal with than the repression of the Commune. One was the liberation of French soil from German occupation, another the reorganization of the army. With wonderful speed and energy the enormous indemnity was raised and progressively paid, the Germans simultaneously evacuating sections of French territory. By March, 1873, France was in a position to agree to pay the last portion of the war tribute the following September (after the fall of Thiers, as it proved), thus

<sup>1</sup> The fierceness of hatreds engendered by the Commune may be illustrated by the following untranslatable comment by Alexandre Dumas fils on Gustave Courbet, a famous writer and a famous painter: "De quel accouplement fabuleux d'une limace et d'un paon, de quelles antithèses génésiaques, de quel suintement sébacé peut avoir été générée cette chose qu'on appelle M. Gustave Courbet? Sous quelle cloche, à l'aide de quel fumier, par suite de quelle mixture de vin, de bière, de mucus corrosif et d'œdème flatulent a pu pousser cette courge sonore et poilue, ce ventre esthétique, incarnation du moi imbécile et impuissant?" (Quoted in Fiaux's history of the Commune, pp. 582-83.)



ridding its soil of the last German many months earlier than had been provided for by the Treaty of Frankfort. The recovery of France aroused the admiration of the civilized world, and the anger of Bismarck, sorry not to have bled the country more. He viewed also with suspicion the organization of the army and the law of July, 1872, establishing practically universal military service. He affected to see in it France's desire for early revenge for the loss of Alsace and Lorraine.

M. Thiers, the great leader, did not find his rule uncontested. Brought into power as the indispensable man to guide the nation out of war, his conceit was somewhat tickled and he wanted to remain necessary. Though over seventy he had shown the energy and endurance of a man in his prime joined to the wisdom and experience of a life spent in public service and the study of history. Elected by an anti-Republican Assembly and himself originally a Royalist, the formulator also of the Bordeaux Compact, he began to feel, nevertheless, in all sincerity that a conservative republic would be the best government, and his vanity made him think himself its best

leader. This conviction was intensified for a while by his successful tactics in threatening to resign, when thwarted, and thus bringing the Assembly to terms. But he tried the scheme once too often.

The majority in the Assembly was not, in fact, anxious to give free rein to Thiers, and it had wanted to avoid committing itself definitely to a republic. It wanted also to insure its own continuation as long as possible, contrary to the wishes of advanced Republicans like Gambetta, who declared that the National Assembly no longer stood for the expression of the popular will and should give way to a real constituent assembly to organize a permanent republic.

The first endeavor of the Royalists was to bring about a restoration of the monarchy. The princes of the Orléanist branch were readmitted to France and restored to their privileges. A fusion between the two branches of the house of Bourbon was absolutely necessary to accomplish anything. The members of the younger or constitutionalist Orléans line, and notably its leader, the comte de Paris, were disposed to yield to the representative

of the legitimist branch, the comte de Chambord. He was an honorable and upright man, yet one who in statesmanship and religion was unable to understand anything since the Revolution. He had not been in France for over forty years, he was permeated with a religious mystical belief not only in the divinity of royalty, but in his own position as God-given (*Dieudonné* was one of his names) and the only saviour of France. Moreover, he could not forgive his cousins the fact that their great-grandfather had voted for the execution of Louis XVI. So he treated their advances haughtily, declined to receive the comte de Paris, and issued a manifesto to the country proclaiming his unwillingness to give up the white flag for the tricolor. Henry V could not let anybody tear from his hand the white standard of Henry IV, of Francis I, and of Jeanne d'Arc.

Such mediævalism dealt the monarchical cause a crushing blow. The Royalists had already begun to look askance at M. Thiers and hinted that his readiness to go on with the Republic was a tacit violation of the Bordeaux Compact. Under the circumstances, however,

his sincerity need not be doubted in believing a republic the only outcome, and his ambition or vanity may be excused for wishing to continue its leader. By the Rivet-Vitet measure of August 31, 1871, M. Thiers, hitherto "chief of executive power," was called "President of the French Republic." He was to exercise his functions so long as the Assembly had not completed its work and was to be responsible to the Assembly. Thus the legislative body elected for an emergency was taking upon itself constituent authority and was tending to perpetuate the Republic which the majority disliked.

From this time the tension grew greater between Thiers and the Assembly, which begrudged him the credit for the negotiations still proceeding, and already mentioned above, for the evacuation of France by the Germans. It thwarted the wish of the Republicans to transfer the seat of the executive and legislature to Paris. Thiers was, indeed, working away from the Bordeaux Compact and was advocating a republic, though a conservative one. This "treachery" the monarchists could not forgive, though bye-elections were



constantly increasing the Republican membership. Thiers did not, on the other hand, welcome the advanced republicanism of Gambetta declaring war on clericalism, and proclaiming the advent of a new "social stratum" (*une couche sociale nouvelle*) for the government of the nation.

By the middle of 1872, Thiers was the open advocate of "la République conservatrice," and this gradual transformation of a transitional republic into a permanent one was what the monarchists could not accept. So they declared open war on M. Thiers. On November 29, 1872, a committee of thirty was appointed at Thiers's instigation to regulate the functions of public authority and the conditions of ministerial responsibility. This was inevitably another step toward the affirmation of a permanent republic by the clearer specification of governmental attributes. The majority of the committee were hostile to M. Thiers and were determined to overthrow him. The Left was also growing dissatisfied with his opposition to a dissolution. He found it increasingly difficult to ride two horses. The committee of thirty wished to prevent Thiers



from exercising pressure on the Assembly by intervention in debates and threats to resign. In February and March, 1873, it proposed that the President should notify the Assembly by message of his intention to speak, and the ensuing discussion was not to take place in his presence. M. Thiers protested in vain against this red tape (*chinoiseries*). The effect was to drive him more and more from the Assembly, where his personal influence might be felt.

The crisis became acute when Jules Grévy, President of the Assembly, a partisan of Thiers, resigned his office after a disagreement on a parliamentary matter. His successor, M. Buffet, at once rigorously supported the hostile Right. In April an election in Paris brought into opposition Charles de Rémusat, Minister of Foreign Affairs and personal friend of Thiers, and Barodet, candidate of the advanced and disaffected Republicans. The governmental candidate was defeated. Encouraged by this the duc de Broglie, leader of the Right, followed up the attack, declaring the Government unable to withstand radicalism. In May he made an interpellation on

the governmental policy. Thiers invoked his right of reply and, on May 24, gave a brilliant defence of his past actions, formulating his plans for the future organization of the Republic. A resolution was introduced by M. Ernoul, censuring the Government and calling for a rigidly conservative policy. The government was put in the minority by a close vote and M. Thiers forthwith resigned. The victors at once chose as his successor the candidate of the Rights, the *maréchal de Mac-Mahon*, *duc de Magenta*, the defeated general of Sedan, a brave and upright man, but a novice in politics and statecraft. He declared his intention of pursuing a conservative policy and of re-establishing and maintaining "l'ordre moral."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE MARÉCHAL DE MAC-MAHON

May, 1873, to January, 1879

“L’ORDRE MORAL,” such was the political catchword of the new administration. Just what it meant was not very clear. In general, however, it was obviously intended to imply resistance to radicalism (republicanism) and the maintenance of a strictly conservative policy, strongly tinged with clericalism.<sup>1</sup> The victors over M. Thiers had revived their desire of a monarchical restoration and many of them hoped that the maréchal de Mac-Mahon would shortly make way for the comte de Chambord. But though an anti-republican he was never willing to lend himself to any really illegal or dishonest manœuvres, and his sense of honor was of great help to him in his want of political competence. So he did not prove the pliant tool of his creators, and his term

<sup>1</sup> Clericalism does not imply political activity on the part of the clergy alone, but quite as much of laymen strongly in favor of the Church.



EDMÉ-PATRICE-MAURICE MACMAHON





of office saw the definite establishment of the Republic.

The first Cabinet was led by the duc de Broglie who took the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. The new Government was viewed askance by the conquerors at Berlin, who disliked such an orderly transmission of powers as an indication of national recovery and stability. Bismarck even exacted new credentials from the French Ambassador. Meanwhile, the Minister of the Interior, Beulé, proceeded to consolidate the authority of the new Cabinet by numerous changes in the prefects of the departments, turning out the "rascals" of Thiers's administration to make room for appointees more amenable to new orders.

The time now seemed ripe for another effort to establish the monarchy under the comte de Chambord. It culminated in the "monarchical campaign" of October, 1873. The monarchical sympathizers were hand-in-glove with the Clericals and for the most part coincided with them. The Royalists were inevitably clerical if for no other reason than that monarchy and religion both seemed to involve continuity, and the legitimacy of the mon-

archy had always been blessed by the Church. The revolutionary Rights of Man were held to be inconsistent with the traditional Rights of God and the monarchy. Moreover, the founders of the third republic had, with noteworthy exceptions like the devout Trochu, been mildly anti-clerical. They were for the most part religious liberals and deists, rarely atheists, but that was enough to array the bishops, like monseigneur Pie of Poitiers, against them. Indeed, a quick religious revival swept over the land, as was shown by numerous pilgrimages, including one to Paray-le-Monial, home of the cult of the Sacred Heart. France herself should be consecrated to the Sacred Heart, and the idea was evolved, afterwards carried out, of the erection of the great votive basilica of the Sacré Cœur on the heights of Montmartre.

The first step toward the restoration of "Henry V" was to persuade the comte de Paris to make new efforts for a fusion of the two branches. Swallowing his pride, the comte de Paris generously went to the home of the comte de Chambord at Frohsdorf, in Austria, in August, and paid his respects to

him as head of the family. As the comte de Chambord had no children, it was expected that the comte de Paris would be his successor. But the old difficulty about the white flag cropped up, and the comte de Chambord stubbornly refused to rule over a country above which waved the revolutionary tricolor.

Matters dragged on through the summer, during the parliamentary recess, and the conservative leaders were outspoken as to their plans to overthrow the Republic. It was hoped that some compromise might be reached by which could be reconciled, as to the flag, the desires of the Assembly which was expected to recall the pretender and those of the comte de Chambord who considered his divinely inspired will superior to that of the representatives of the people. It was suggested that the question of the flag might be settled *after* his accession to the throne. The embassy to Salzburg, in October, of M. Chesnelong, an emissary of a committee of nine of the Royalist leaders, achieved only a half-success, but left matters sufficiently indeterminate to encourage them in continuing their plans. Matters seemed progressing swimmingly when,

on October 27, an unexpected letter from the pretender to M. Chesnelong categorically declared that *nothing* would induce him to sacrifice the white banner.

The effect of this letter was to make all hopes of a restoration impossible. Everybody knew that the majority of Frenchmen would never give up their flag for the white one, whether this were dignified by the name of "standard of Arques and Ivry," or whether one called it irreverently a "towel," as did Pope Pius IX, impatient at the obstinacy of the comte de Chambord. In the midst of the general confusion only one thing seemed feasible if governmental anarchy were to be avoided, namely, the prorogation of Mac-Mahon's authority, as a rampart against rising democracy and a permanent republic. This condition the Orléanist Right Centre turned to their advantage. By a vote of November 20, the executive power was conferred for a definite period of seven years on the maréchal de Mac-Mahon. Thus a head of the nation was provided who might perhaps outlast the Assembly. The vote might be interpreted either as the beginning of a permanent



republican régime, as it proved to be, or as the establishment of a definite interlude in anticipation of a new attempt to set up a monarchy, this time to the advantage of the younger branch. Many hoped that the comte de Chambord would soon be dead, his white flag forgotten, and the way open to the comte de Paris. The Orléanists were pleased by this latter idea, the Republicans were glad to have the republican régime recognized for, at any rate, seven years to come, accompanied by the promise of a constitutional commission of thirty members. The Legitimists alone were disappointed, and, oblivious of the fact that the comte de Chambord had lost through his folly, they were before long ready to vent their wrath on Mac-Mahon and his adviser, the duc de Broglie, who was responsible for the presidential prorogation.

The pretender had been completely taken aback at the impression produced by his letter. Convinced of his divinely inspired omniscience, and certain that he was the foreordained ruler of France, he had thought that the Assembly would give way on the question of the flag, or that the army would follow him,



or that Mac-Mahon would yield. His state coach had been made ready and a military uniform awaited him at a tailor's. He hastened in secret to Versailles, where he remained for a while in retirement to watch events, and where Mac-Mahon refused to see him. Then, after the vote on the presidency, he sadly returned into exile forever.

Never was a greater service done to France than when the comte de Chambord refused to give up his flag. Completely out of touch with the country through a life spent in exile, inspired with the feeling of his divine rights and their superiority to the will of democracy, he would scarcely have ascended the throne before some conflict would have broken out and the history of France would have registered one revolution more.

The duc de Broglie had considered it good form to resign after the vote of November 20, but Mac-Mahon immediately entrusted to him the selection of a second Cabinet. In this Cabinet the portfolio of Foreign Affairs was given to the duc Decazes, a skilled diplomat, but the Legitimists were offended by some of the cabinet changes and their dislike of the

duc de Broglie gradually became more acute. Finally, after several months of parliamentary skirmishing the second Broglie Cabinet fell before a coalition vote of Republicans and extreme Royalists with a few Bonapartists, on May 16, 1874. The Right Centre and Left Centre had unsuccessfully joined in support of the Cabinet. The nation was taking another step toward republican control and the overthrow of the conservatives.

From now on, Mac-Mahon's task became increasingly difficult. After the split in the conservative majority it was necessary to rely on combination ministries, representing different sets and harder to reconcile or to propitiate. The result of Mac-Mahon's first efforts was a Cabinet led by a soldier, General de Cissey, and having no pronounced political tendencies.

Party differences were becoming accentuated. The downfall of the Broglie Cabinet had been largely due to the extreme Royalists and the Orléanists could not forgive them. The situation was made worse by differences in interpretation of the law of November 20, establishing the "septennat" of the maréchal de Mac-Mahon. Some of the Monarchists

maintained the "septennat personnel," namely, the election of one specific person to hold office for seven years, with the idea that he could withdraw at any time in favor of a king. Others interpreted the law as establishing a "septennat impersonnel," a definite truce of seven years, which should still hold even if Mac-Mahon had to be replaced before the expiration of the time by another President. Then, they hoped, their enemy Thiers would be dead. The Republicans were, of course, desirous of making the impersonal "septennat" lead to a permanent republic, and declared that Mac-Mahon was not the President of a seven years' republic, but President, for seven years, of the Republic.

In this state of affairs the Bonapartists now became somewhat active again. Strangely enough, the disasters of 1870 were already growing sufficiently remote for some of the anti-Republicans to turn again to the prospect of empire. This menace frightened the moderate Royalists into what they had kept hesitating to do; that is to say, into spurring to activity the purposely inactive and dilatory constitutional commission.

The stumbling-block was the recognition of the Republic itself and the admission that the form of government existing in France was to be permanent. There was much parliamentary skirmishing over various plans, rejected one after the other, inclining in turn toward the Republic and a monarchy. Finally, some of the Monarchists, discouraged by the rising tide of "radicalism," and frightened lest unwillingness to accept a conservative republic now might result still worse for them in the future, rallied in support of the motion of M. Wallon, known as the "amendement Wallon," which was adopted by a vote of 353 to 352 (January, 1875): "The President of the Republic is elected by absolute majority of votes by the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies united as a National Assembly. He is chosen for seven years and is re-eligible."

In this vote the fateful statement was made concerning the election of a President other than Mac-Mahon and the transmission of power in a republic. The third Republic received its definite consecration by a majority of *one vote*.

The vote on the Wallon amendment dealt



with only one article of a project not yet voted as a whole, but it was the crossing of the Rubicon. The other articles were adopted by increased majorities.

The Ministry of General de Cissey had already resigned upon a minor question, but had held over at the President's request. MacMahon now asked the Monarchist M. Buffet to form a conservative conciliation Cabinet, which was made up almost entirely from the Right Centre (Orléanists) and the Left Centre (moderate Republicans) and accepted at first by the Republican Left. By this Cabinet still one more step was taken toward Republican preponderance.

During the Buffet Ministry three important matters occupied public attention. One was the completion of the new constitution. A second was the creation of "free" universities, not under control of the State. This step was advocated in the name of intellectual freedom, but the whole scheme was backed by the Catholics and merely resulted in the creation of Catholic faculties in several great cities. A third matter was the intense anxiety over the prospect of a rupture with Germany.



Bismarck was renewing his policy of pin-pricks. The French army had been strengthened by a battalion to every regiment, and so Bismarck complained of the strictures of French and Belgian bishops on his anti-papal policy. Whether he only meant to humiliate France still more, or whether he actually desired a new rupture so as to crush the country finally, is not clear. At any rate, with the aid of England and especially of Russia, France showed that she was not helpless, and Bismarck protested that he was absolutely friendly.

By the close of 1875, the measures constituting the new Government had been voted and, on December 31, the Assembly, which had governed France since the Franco-Prussian War, was dissolved to make way for the new legislature. During the succeeding elections M. Buffet's Cabinet, antagonized by the Republicans and rent by internal dissensions, went to pieces. M. Buffet personally suffered disastrously at the polls. The slate was clear for a totally new organization. The Assembly had done many a good service, but its dilatoriness in establishing a permanent government, its ingratitude to M. Thiers, its clericalism,

and its stubbornness in trying to foist a king on the people made it pass away unregretted by a country which had far outstripped it in republicanism.

The "Constitution of 1875," under which, with some modifications, France is still governed, is not a single document constructed *a priori*, like the Constitution of the United States. It was partly the result of the evolution of the National Assembly itself, partly the result of compromises and dickerings between hostile groups. Particularly, it expressed the jealousy of a monarchical assembly for a President of a republic, and the desire, therefore, to keep power in the hands of its own legislative successor. The Assembly took it for granted that the Chamber of Deputies would have the same opinions as itself. As a matter of fact, the political complexion of the legislature has been consistently toward radicalism, and the result has hindered a strong executive and promoted legislative demagoguery.

The Constitution of 1875 may be considered as consisting of the Constitutional Law of February 25, relating to the organization of the public powers (President, Senate, Cham-

ber of Deputies, Ministers, etc.); the Constitutional Law of the previous day, February 24, relating to the organization of the Senate; the Constitutional Law of July 16, on the relations of the public powers. Subsidiary "organic laws" voted later determined the procedure for the election of Senators and Deputies. The vote of February 25 was the crucial one in the definite establishment of the Republican régime. The Constitution has undergone certain slight modifications since its adoption.

By the Constitution of 1875 the government of the French Republic was vested in a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies. The Senate consisted of 300 members, of whom 75 were chosen for life by the expiring Assembly, their successors to be elected by co-optation in the Senate itself. The other 225, chosen for nine years and renewable by thirds, were to be elected by a method of indirect selection. In 1884, the choice of life Senators ceased and the seats, as they fell vacant, have been distributed among the Departments of the country. The Deputies were elected by universal suffrage for a period of four years. Unless a

candidate obtained an absolute majority of the votes cast, the election was void, and a new one was necessary. Except during the period from 1885 to 1889, the Deputies have represented districts determined, unless for densely populated ones, by the administrative *arrondissements*. From 1885 to 1889, the *scrutin de liste* was in operation: the whole Department voted on a ticket containing as many names as there were *arrondissements*. The prerogatives of the two houses were identical except that financial measures were to originate in the Chamber of Deputies. As a matter of fact, the Senate has fallen into the background, and the habit of considering the vote of the Chamber rather than that of the Senate as important in a change of Ministry has made it the true source of government in France. The two houses met at Versailles until 1879; since then Paris has been the capital, except for the election of a President. After separate decision by each house to do so, or the request of the President, they could meet in joint assembly as a Constitutional Convention to revise the constitution.

The Senate and Chamber, united in joint



session as a National Assembly, were to choose a President for a definite term of seven years, not to fill out an incomplete term vacated by another President. The President could be re-elected. With the consent of the Senate he could dissolve the Chamber, but this restriction made the privilege almost inoperative in practice. He was irresponsible, the nominal executive and figurehead of the State, but all his acts had to be countersigned by a responsible Minister, by which his initiative was greatly reduced. In fact the President had really less power than a constitutional king.

The real executive authority was in the hands of the Cabinet, headed by a Premier or *Président du conseil*.<sup>1</sup> The Ministry was responsible to the Senate and Chamber (in practice, as we have seen, to the Chamber), and was expected to resign as a whole if put by a vote in the minority. By custom the President selects the Premier from the majority and the latter selects his colleagues in the Cabinet, trying to make them representatives

<sup>1</sup> Before the Constitution of 1875, the Premier was only *vice-président du conseil*.



of the wishes of the Parliament. The French Republic is therefore managed by a parliamentary government.

The first elections under the new constitution resulted very much as might be expected: the Senate became in personnel the true successor of the Assembly, the Chamber of Deputies contained most of the new men. The Senate was conservative and monarchical, the Chamber was republican. Therefore, the President of the Republic entrusted the formation of a Ministry to M. Jules Dufaure, of the Left Centre, the views of which group differed hardly at all from those of the Right Centre, except in a full acceptance of the new conditions. Unfortunately, M. Dufaure found it impossible to ride two horses at once and to satisfy both the conservative Senate and the majority in the Chamber of more advanced Republicans than himself. He mistrusted the Republican leader Gambetta, though the latter was now far more moderate, and he sympathized too much with the Clericals to suit the new order of things. So his Cabinet resigned (December 2, 1876), less than nine months after its appointment, and the maré-

chal de Mac-Mahon felt it necessary, very much against his will, to call to power Jules Simon. He had previously tried unsuccessfully to form a Cabinet from the Right Centre under the duc de Broglie.

The duc de Broglie remained, however, the power behind the throne. The President was under the political advice of the conservative set, whose firm conviction he shared, that the new Republic was advancing headlong into irreligion. The course of political events now took on a strong religious flavor. Jules Simon was a liberal, which was considered a misfortune, though he announced himself now as "deeply republican and deeply conservative." But people knew his unfriendly relations with Gambetta, which dated from 1871, when he checkmated the dictator at Bordeaux. It was hoped that open dissension might break out in the Republican party which would justify measures tending to a conservative reaction, and help tide over the time until 1880. Then the constitution might be revised at the expiration of Mac-Mahon's term and the monarchy perhaps restored.

Gambetta was, however, now a very differ-

ent man. Discarding his former unbending radicalism, he was now the advocate of the "political policy of results," or *opportunism*, a method of conciliation, of compromise, and of waiting for the favorable opportunity. This was to be, henceforth, the policy closely connected with his name and fame. So Jules Simon soon was sacrificed.

The efforts of the Clerical party bore chiefly in two directions: control of education and advocacy of increased papal authority, particularly of the temporal power of the Pope, dispossessed of his states a few years before by the Government of Victor Emmanuel. This latter course could only tend to embroil France with Italy. So convinced was Gambetta of the unwise and disloyal activities of the Ultramontanes that on May 4, in a speech to the Chamber, he uttered his famous cry: "Le cléricalisme, voilà l'ennemi!"

Jules Simon found himself in a very difficult position. Desirous of conciliating Mac-Mahon and his clique, he adopted a policy somewhat at variance with his former liberal religious views. On the other hand, he could not satisfy the President, who had always disliked him,

or those who had determined upon his overthrow. The crisis came on May 16, 1877, when Mac-Mahon, taking advantage of some very minor measures, wrote a haughty and indignant letter to Jules Simon, to say that the Minister no longer had his confidence. Jules Simon, backed up by a majority in the Chamber, could very well have engaged in a constitutional struggle with Mac-Mahon, but he rather weakly resigned the next day.<sup>1</sup> Thus was opened the famous conflict known in French history, from its date, as the "Seize-Mai."

No sooner was Jules Simon out of the way than Mac-Mahon appointed a reactionary coalition Ministry of Orléanists and Imperialists headed by the duc de Broglie, and held apparently ready in waiting. The Ministers were at variance on many political questions, but united as to clericalism. The plan was to dissolve the Republican Chamber with the co-operation of the anti-Republican Senate, in the hope that a new election, under official

<sup>1</sup> The Chamber, on May 12, had expressed itself in favor of the publicity of meetings of municipal councils, during the absence of the Minister of the Interior. On May 15, it had passed the second reading of a law, opposed by Jules Simon, on the freedom of the press.



pressure, would result in a monarchical lower house also. The Chamber of Deputies was therefore prorogued until June 16 and then dissolved. At the meeting of May 18, the Republicans presented a solid front of 363 in their protest against the high-handed action of the maréchal de Mac-Mahon.

The new Cabinet began by a wholesale revocation of administrative officials throughout the country, and spent the summer in unblushing advocacy of its candidates. Those favored by the Government were so indicated and their campaign manifestoes were printed on official white paper.<sup>1</sup> The Republicans united their forces to support the re-election of the 363 and gave charge of their campaign to a committee of eighteen under the inspiring leadership of Gambetta. In a great speech at Lille, Gambetta declared that the President would have to "give in or give up" (*se soumettre ou se démettre*), for which crime of *lèse-majesté* he was condemned by default to fine and imprisonment. In September, Thiers, the great leader of the early Republic, died, and his funeral was made the occasion of

<sup>1</sup> In France only official posters may be printed on white paper.





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a great manifestation of Republican unity. Finally, in spite of governmental pressure and the pulpit exhortations of the clergy, the elections in October resulted in a new Republican Chamber. The reactionary Cabinet was face to face with as firm an opposition as before.

The duc de Broglie, in view of this crushing defeat, was ready to withdraw, and Mac-Mahon, after some hesitation, accepted his resignation. Mac-Mahon's own fighting blood was up, however, and he tried the experiment of an extra-parliamentary Ministry led by General de Rochebouët, the members of which were conservatives without seats in Parliament. But the Chamber refused to enter into relations with it, and as the budget was pressing and the Senate was not disposed to support a second dissolution, Mac-Mahon had to submit and the Rochebouët Cabinet withdrew.

Thus ended Mac-Mahon's unsuccessful attempt to exert his personal power. The Seize-Mai has sometimes been likened to an abortive *coup d'état*. The parallel is hardly justifiable. Mac-Mahon would have welcomed a return of the monarchy at the end of his term

of office, but he intended to remain faithful to the constitution, however much he might strain it or interpret it under the advice of his Clerical managers, and though he might have been willing to use troops to enforce his wishes. One unfortunate result ensued: the crisis left the Presidency still more weak. Any repetition of Mac-Mahon's experiment of dissolving the Chamber would revive accusations against one of his successors of attempting a *coup d'état*. There have been times when the country would have welcomed the dissolution by a strong President of an incompetent Chamber. Unfortunately, Mac-Mahon stood for the reactionaries against the Republic. His course of action would be a dangerous precedent.

The new order of things was marked by the advent of another Dufaure Ministry, very moderate in tendency, but acceptable to the majority. Most of the high-handed doings of the Broglie Cabinet were revoked, much to the disgust of Mac-Mahon, who frequently lost his temper when obliged to sign documents of which he disapproved. Finally, in January, 1879, in a controversy with his Cabinet

over some military transfers, Mac-Mahon resigned, over a year before the expiration of his term of office. Moreover, at the recent elections to the Senate the Republicans had obtained control of even that body. Thus he was alone, with both houses and the Ministry against him.

In spite of the unfortunate endless internal dissensions, France made great strides in national recovery during the Presidency of Mac-Mahon. His rank and military title gave prestige to the Republic in presence of the diplomats of European monarchies, the German crisis of 1875 showed that Bismarck was not to have a free hand in crushing France, the participation of France in the Congress of Berlin enabled the country to take a place again among the European Powers. Finally, the International Exhibition of 1878 was an invitation to the world to witness the recovery of France from her disasters and to testify to her right to lead again in art and industry.

The Presidency of Mac-Mahon shows the desperate efforts of the Monarchists to overthrow the Republic, and then to control it in view of an ultimate Restoration, either



by obstructing the vote of a constitution or by hindering its operation. Throughout, the Monarchists and the Clericals work together or are identical. The end of his term of office found the whole Government in the hands of the Republicans.

## CHAPTER V

### THE ADMINISTRATION OF JULES GRÉVY

January, 1879, to December, 1887

THE resignation of the maréchal de MacMahon was followed by the immediate gathering, in accordance with the constitution, of the National Assembly, which chose as President for seven years Jules Grévy. The new chief magistrate, elected without a competitor, was already seventy-two, and had in his long career won the reputation of a dignified and sound statesman, in whose hands public affairs might be entrusted with absolute safety. He represented a step beyond the military and aristocratic régime which had preceded him. The embodiment of the old *bourgeoisie*, he had, along with its qualities, some of its defects. Eminently cautious, his statesmanship had been at times a non-committal reserve more than constructive genius. His parsimony soon caused people to accuse him of unduly saving his salary and state allowances, while his personal dislikes led him

to err grievously in his choice of advisers, or rather in his elimination of Gambetta, to whom circumstances now pointed.

Jules Grévy hated Gambetta, undeniably the leading figure in the Republican party since the death of Thiers, and neglected to entrust to him the formation of a Cabinet. Thiers himself had shown greater wisdom. He, too, had disliked the raging and apparently futile volubility of the young tribune during the Franco-Prussian War, but Thiers got over calling Gambetta a "fou furieux." On the contrary, just after the Seize-Mai and before his own death, when Thiers was expecting to return to the Presidency as successor to a discredited Mac-Mahon, he had intended to make Gambetta the head of his Cabinet. For Gambetta with maturity had become more moderate. Instead of drastic political remedies he was gradually evolving, as already stated, the policy of "Opportunism" so closely linked with his name, the method of gradual advance by concessions and compromises, by taking advantage of occasions and making one's general policy conform with opportunity.

If Gambetta, as leader of the majority group

in the Republican party, which had evicted Mac-Mahon, had become Prime Minister, it is conceded that the precedent would have been set by the new administration for parliamentary government with a true party leadership, as in Great Britain. Instead, Grévy entrusted the task of forming a Ministry to an upright but colorless leader named Waddington, at the head of a composite Cabinet, more moderate in policy than Gambetta, who became presiding officer of the Chamber of Deputies. The consequence was that, after lasting less than a year, it gave way to another Cabinet led by the great political trimmer Freycinet,<sup>1</sup> until in due time it was in turn succeeded by the Ministry of Jules Ferry in September, 1880.

It must not be inferred that nothing was accomplished by the Waddington and Freycinet Ministries. Indeed, Jules Ferry, the chief Republican next to Gambetta, was himself a member of these two Cabinets before leading his own.

<sup>1</sup> Gambetta's former assistant during the national defence after the first disasters; a brilliant organizer, but in general policy a *nolonté*, to use the term Gambetta coined about him on the basis of the word *volonté*. As Minister of Public Works he initiated at this period great improvements in the internal development of France, especially in the railways.

The lining-up of Republican groups, as opposed to the Monarchists, under the new administration was: the Left Centre, composed as in the past of ultra-conservative Republicans, constantly diminishing numerically; the Republican Left, which followed Jules Ferry; the Republican Union of Gambetta; and, finally, the radical Extreme Left, which had taken for itself many of the advanced measures advocated by Gambetta when he had been a radical. One of its leaders was Georges Clemenceau. Between the two large groups of Ferry and Gambetta there was little difference in ideals, but Gambetta was now the Opportunist and Ferry made his own Gambetta's old battle-cry against clericalism.

The Chamber elected after the Seize-Mai was by reaction markedly anti-Clerical, and the Waddington Cabinet, to begin with, contained three Protestants and a freethinker. Obviously steps would soon be taken to defeat the "enemy." In this movement Jules Ferry was from the beginning a leader, by direct action as well as by the educational reforms which he carried out as Minister of Public Instruction. Jules Ferry became, more than





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Gambetta, the great bugbear of the Clericals and the author of the "lois scélérates."

During the Waddington Ministry Jules Ferry began his efforts for the reorganization of superior instruction, and among his measures carried through the Chamber of Deputies the notorious "Article 7" indirectly aimed at Jesuit influence in *secondary* teaching as well: "No person can direct any public or private establishment whatsoever or teach therein if he belongs to an unauthorized order." The Jesuits had at that time no legal footing in France, but were openly tolerated. The Senate rejected this article under the Freycinet Ministry and the law was finally adopted thus apparently weakened. But Jules Ferry, nothing daunted, immediately put into operation the no less notorious decrees of March, 1880, reviving older laws going back even to 1762, which had long since fallen into disuse. By these decrees the Jesuit establishments were to be closed and the members dispersed within three months. Moreover, every unauthorized order was, under penalty of expulsion, to apply for authorization within a like limit of time. The expulsion of the Jesuits

was carried out with a certain spectacular display of passive resistance on the part of those evicted. Later in the year similar steps were taken against many other organizations.

It is evident from the above that the promotion of educational reform under Republican control was definitely connected with measures directed against clerical domination. The French Catholic Church, on its part, treated every attempt toward laicization as a form of persecution. But Jules Ferry unhesitatingly extended his policy when he became Prime Minister. His measures were genuinely neutral, but his reputation as a Voltairian free-thinker and a freemason inevitably afforded his opponents an excuse for their charges.

Jules Ferry's reforms in education, extending over several Cabinet periods as late as 1882, included secondary education for girls, and free, obligatory, lay, primary instruction. To Americans accustomed to such methods of education it is difficult to conceive the struggles of Jules Ferry and his assistant on the floor of the House, Paul Bert, in carrying through these measures for the training of the democracy.

In foreign affairs Jules Ferry inaugurated a more active policy symptomatic of the return of France to participation in international matters. At the Congress of Berlin, France had avoided entanglements, but, even at that early period, Lord Salisbury had hinted to M. Waddington, present as French delegate, that no interference would be made by England, were France to advance claims in Tunis. This suggestion came, perhaps, originally from Bismarck, who was not averse to embroiling France with Italy. That country longed for Tunis so conveniently situated near Sicily. England, moreover, was probably not desirous of seeing the Italians thus strategically ensconced in the Mediterranean.

In 1881, financial manœuvres and the plundering expeditions into Algeria of border tribes called Kroumirs afforded a pretext for intervention, to the indignation of Italy, which was thus more than ever inclined to seek alliances against France, even with Germany. Here, indeed, was the germ of the Triple Alliance. An easy advance to Tunis forced the Bey to accept a French protectorate by the Treaty of the Bardo on May 12, 1881. Later in



the year the situation became rather serious, and new and rather costly military operations became necessary, including the occupation of Sfax, Gabès, and Kairouan.

Thus France came into possession of valuable territories, but at the cost of Italian indignation. Moreover, Jules Ferry, who was always one of the most hated of party leaders in his own country, reaped no advantage to himself. His enemies affected to believe that the whole Tunisian war was a game of capitalists, or was planned for effect upon elections to the new Chamber. The boulevards refused to take the Kroumirs seriously and joked about "Cherchez le Kroumir." Finally, on November 9, 1881, the personal intervention of Gambetta before the newly elected Chamber of Deputies saved the Cabinet on a vote of confidence. Jules Ferry none the less determined to resign, and Gambetta, in spite of Grévy's aversion, was the inevitable man for the formation of a new Cabinet.

Gambetta's great opportunity had come too late to be effective. The undoubted leader of the Republic, he had grown in statesmanship since his early days, but was still hated

by men like Grévy who could not get over their old prejudices. Then the advanced radicals, or *intransigeants*, thought him a traitor to his old platforms or *programmes*.<sup>1</sup> They blamed his Opportunism and said that he wanted power without responsibility. Gambetta's enemies, whether the duc de Broglie or Clemenceau, talked of his secret influence (*pouvoir occulte*), and accused him of aspiring to a dictatorship, in fact if not in name. Their suspicions were somewhat deepened by Gambetta's ardent advocacy of the *scrutin de liste* instead of the existing *scrutin d'arrondissement*.<sup>2</sup>

It was asserted that Gambetta wanted to diminish the independence of local representation and marshal behind himself a subservient majority. To Gambetta the *scrutin de liste* was the truly republican form of representation, the one existing under the Na-

<sup>1</sup> Especially as to the unlimited revision of the constitution and the *immediate* separation of Church and State.

<sup>2</sup> Gambetta's contempt for the parochialism of the elections by district was great. He felt that departmental tickets would favor the choice of better men. One must remember how large a proportion of the French Deputies are physicians to appreciate the scorn of Gambetta's saying that the *scrutin d'arrondissement* produced a lot of *sous-vétérinaires*, that is, men who were not even decent "horse-doctors."

tional Assembly and abolished by the reactionaries under the new constitution.

Thus, Gambetta had against him, during the campaign for renewal of the Chamber of Deputies in the summer of 1881, not only the anti-Republicans but also timid liberals like Jules Simon, the influence of President Grévy, and the *intransigeants*. The Senate was averse to the *scrutin de liste* and rejected, in the spring of 1881, the measure which Gambetta carried through the Chamber. Gambetta, formerly the idol of the working classes of Paris, met with opposition, was hooted in one of his own political rallies, and was re-elected on the first ballot in one only of the two districts in which he was a candidate.

The elections of the Chamber of 1881 resulted in a strongly Republican body, in which, however, the majority subdivided into groups. Gambetta's "Union républicaine" was the most numerous, followed by Ferry's "Gauche républicaine," and the extremists. A certain fraction of Gambetta's group, including Henri Brisson and Charles Floquet, also tended to stick together. They were the germ of what became in time the great Radical party.

It had been hoped that Gambetta would bring into his Cabinet all the other leaders of his party, and at last form a great governing ministry. But men like Léon Say and Freycinet refused their collaboration because of divergence of views or personal pride. Gambetta then decided to pick his collaborators from his immediate friends and partisans, some of whom had yet a reputation to make. The anticipated "Great Ministry" turned out to be, its opponents said, a "ministère de commis," a cabinet of clerks. The fact that it contained men like Waldeck-Rousseau, Raynal, and Rouvier showed, however, that Gambetta could discover ability in others. But it was declared that the "dictator" was marshalling his henchmen. The extremists, especially, were furious because Gambetta also magnanimously gave important posts to non-Republicans like General de Miribel and the journalist J.-J. Weiss.

The "Great Ministry" remained in office two months and a half and came to grief on the proposed revision of the constitution, in which Gambetta wished to incorporate the *scrutin de liste*. In January, 1882, it had to



resign and Gambetta died on the last day of the same year. Thus, the third Republic lost its leading statesman since the death of Thiers.

The year 1882 was filled by the two ineffective Cabinets of Freycinet (second time) and of Duclerc. Under the former, France made the mistake, injurious to her interests and prestige, of withdrawing from the Egyptian condominium with Great Britain and allowing the latter country free play for the conquest and occupation of Egypt. Thus the fruits of De Lesseps' piercing of the Isthmus of Suez went definitely to England. The death of Gambetta under the Duclerc-Fallières Ministry<sup>1</sup> seemed to reawaken the hopes of the anti-Republicans, and Jerome Napoleon, chief Bonapartist pretender since the decease of the Prince Imperial, issued a manifesto against the Republic. Parliament fell into a ludicrous panic, various contradictory measures were proposed, and in the general confusion the Cabinet fell after an adverse vote.

In this contingency President Grévy did what he should have done before, and called to office the leading statesman. This was now

<sup>1</sup> M. Fallières took the place of Duclerc as President of the Council during the last days.



Jules Ferry. At last France had an administration which lasted a little over two years. But Ferry was still intensely unpopular. He had become the successor of Gambetta and the exponent of the policy of Opportunism, which he tried to carry out with even more constructive statesmanship. But he was totally wanting in Gambetta's magnetism, and his domineering ways made him hated the more. The Clericals opposed him as the "persecutor" of the Catholic religion, and the Radicals thought he did not go far enough in his hostility to the Church. For Jules Ferry saw that the times were not ripe for disestablishment, and that the system of the *Concordat*, in vogue since Napoleon I, really gave the State more control over the Clergy than it would have in case of separation. The State would lose its power in appointments and salaries. Jules Ferry knew that the Church could be useful to him, and the politic Leo XIII, very different from Pius IX, was ready to meet him part way, though the Pope himself had to humor to a certain extent the hostility to the Republic of the French Monarchists and Clericals. Jules Ferry, like Gambetta, also had to put

up with the veiled hostility of President Grévy, working in Parliament through the intrigues of his son-in-law Wilson. Moreover, Ferry was made to bear the odium for a long period of financial depression, which had lasted since 1882, starting with the sensational failure (*krach*) of a large bank, the Union générale. So his career was made a torture and he was vilified perhaps more than any man of the third Republic.

The extremists had in time another grievance against Jules Ferry in his opposition to a radical revision of the constitution. The enemies of the Republic still feigned to believe, especially when the death of the comte de Chambord in 1883 had fused the Legitimists and Orléanists, that an integral revision would pave the way for a monarchical restoration. The Radicals demanded the suppression of the power of the Senate, whose consent was necessary to summon a constitutional convention. A Congress was summoned in 1884 at which the very limited programme of the Ministry was put through. The changes merely eliminated from the constitution the prescriptions for senatorial elections. After

this, by an ordinary statute, life-senatorships were abolished for the future, and some changes were made in the choice of senatorial electors.

Jules Ferry was what would to-day be called an imperialist. In this he may have been unwise, for the French, though intrepid explorers, do not care to settle permanently far from the motherland. The north coast of Africa might have been a sufficient field for enterprise. But Jules Ferry thought that the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria, and Italy, formed in 1882, was going to isolate France permanently in Europe. So she was to regain her prestige by territorial annexations in the Sudan, the Congo, Madagascar, Annam, and Tonkin.

The French had some nominal rights on Tonkin since 1874, and disturbances there had caused a revival of activities. When the French officer Rivière was killed in an ambuscade in May, 1883, Jules Ferry sent heavy reinforcements and forced the King of Annam to acknowledge a French protectorate. This stirred up the Chinese, who also claimed Annam, and who caused the invasion of Tonkin by guerillas supported by their own troops.

After various operations in Tonkin the Treaty of Tien-tsin was signed with China in May, 1884, by which China made the concessions called for by the French. Within a month Chinese troops ambuscaded a French column at Bac-Le and the Government decided on a punitive expedition. Thus France was engaged in troublesome warfare with China, without direct parliamentary authorization. The bombardment of Foo-chow, the attack on the island of Formosa, and the blockade of the coast dragged along unsatisfactorily through 1884 and 1885.

While Jules Ferry in the spring of 1885 was actually negotiating a final peace with China on terms satisfactory to the French, the cession of Annam and Tonkin with a commercial treaty, and while he was categorically affirming in the Chamber of Deputies the success of military operations in Tonkin, a sudden dispatch from the East threw everything into a turmoil. General Brière de l'Isle telegraphed from Tonkin that the French had been disastrously defeated at Lang-son and General de Négrier severely wounded. The news proved to be a grievous exaggeration which was con-



tradicted by a later dispatch some hours after, but the damage was done. On March 30, in the Chamber of Deputies, Jules Ferry was insulted and abused by the leaders of a coalition of anti-Republicans and Radicals. The "Tonkinois," as his vilifiers called him, disgusted and discouraged, made little attempt to defend himself, and his Cabinet fell by a vote of 306 to 149. On April 4, the preliminaries of a victorious treaty of peace were signed with China.

The fall of Jules Ferry was a severe blow to efficient government. It marked the end, for a long time, of any effort to construct satisfactory united Cabinets led by a strong man. It set a precedent for innumerable short-lived Ministries built on the treacherous sands of shifting groups. It paved the way for a deterioration in parliamentary management. It accentuated the bitter hatred now existing between the Union des gauches, as the united Gambetta and Ferry Opportunist groups called themselves, on the one hand, and the Radicals and the Extreme Left on the other. The Radicals, in particular, were influential, and one of their more moderate members,



Henri Brisson, became the head of the next Cabinet. Brisson's name testified to an advance toward radicalism, but the Cabinet contained all sorts of moderate and nondescript elements, dubbed a "concentration" Cabinet. Its chief function was to tide over the elections of 1885, for a new Chamber of Deputies. In anticipation of this election Gambetta's long-desired *scrutin de liste* had been rather unexpectedly voted.

The workings of the new method of voting were less satisfactory than had been anticipated. Republican dissensions and a greater union of the opposition caused a tremendous reactionary landslide on the first ballot. This was greatly reduced on the second ballot, so that the Republicans emerged with a large though diminished majority. But the old Left Centre had practically disappeared and the Radicals were vastly more numerous. The great divisions were now the Right, the moderate Union des gauches, the Radicals, and the revolutionary Extreme Left. The Brisson Cabinet was blamed for not "working" the elections more successfully and it resigned at the time of President Grévy's re-election. He

had reached the end of his<sup>1</sup> seven years' term and was chosen again on December 28, 1885. He was to have troublesome experiences during the short time he remained in the Presidency.

The Freycinet, Goblet, and Rouvier Cabinets, which fill the rest of Grévy's Presidency, were largely engrossed with a new danger in the person of General Boulanger. He first appeared in a prominent position as Minister of War in the Freycinet Cabinet. A young, brilliant, and popular though unprincipled officer, he soon devoted himself to demagoguery and put himself at the head of the jingoes who called Ferry the slave of Bismarck. The expeditions of Tunis and Tonkin had, moreover, thrown a glamour over the flag and the army.

Boulanger began at once to play politics and catered to the advanced parties, who adopted him as their own. He backed up the spectacular expulsion of the princes, which, as an answer to the monarchical progress, drove from France the heads of formerly reigning families and their direct heirs in line of primogeniture, and carried out their radiation from the army. The populace cheered the gallant general on his black horse, and when Bismarck com-

plained that he was a menace to the peace of Europe Boulanger's fortune seemed made. At a certain moment France and Germany were on the brink of war in the so-called Schnaebeler affair.<sup>1</sup> So, when Boulanger was left out of the Rouvier Cabinet combination in May, 1887, as dangerous, he played more than ever to the gallery as the persecuted saviour of France and, on being sent to take command of an army corps in the provinces at Clermont-Ferrand, he was escorted to the train by thousands of enthusiastic manifestants.

Meanwhile, President Grévy was nearing a disaster. In October, 1887, General Caffarel, an important member of the General Staff, was arrested for participating in the sale of decorations. When Boulanger declared that the arrest of Caffarel was an indirect assault on himself, originally responsible for Caffarel's appointment to the General Staff, the affair got greater notoriety. The scandal assumed national proportions when it was found to involve the President's own son-in-law Daniel Wilson, well known to be a shady and tricky

<sup>1</sup> The French claimed that a government official had been lured over the frontier and illegally arrested.

politician, who had the octogenarian President under his thumb. The matter reached the scale of a Cabinet crisis, since it was by an overthrow of the Ministry that the President could best be reached. Unfortunately, Grévy could not see that the most dignified thing for him to do was to resign, even though he was in no way involved in Wilson's misdemeanors. For days he tried to persuade prominent men to form a Cabinet; he tried to argue his right and duty to remain. But finally the Chamber and Senate brought actual pressure upon him by voting to adjourn to specific hours in the expectation of a presidential communication. He bowed to the inevitable and retired from the Presidency with the reputation of a discredited old miser, instead of the great statesman he had appeared on beginning his term of office.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE ADMINISTRATION OF SADI CARNOT

December, 1887, to June, 1894

THE successor of Jules Grévy was Sadi Carnot, in many ways the best choice. As has been seen, the transition was less easy than the two ballots of the National Assembly seemed to indicate (December 3, 1887). The intrigues of the so-called "nuits historiques" (November 28-30) had been an endeavor of the Radicals to keep Grévy, in order to ward off Jules Ferry as his successor. Finally, Carnot was a compromise candidate, or "dark horse," a Moderate acceptable to the Radicals still unwilling to endure the leading candidate Ferry.

President Carnot, hitherto known chiefly as a capable civil engineer and a successful Cabinet officer, was the heir to the name and traditions of a great republican family. His integrity was a guarantee of honesty in office, and his personal dignity was bound to heighten the prestige of the chief magistracy, somewhat weakened by his predecessor Grévy. On the





SADI CARNOT



other hand, Carnot's conception of the constitutional irresponsibility or neutrality of his office was an insufficient bulwark to the State against the intrigues of petty politicians and the inefficiencies of the parliamentary régime. Consequently his term of office saw the Republic exposed to two of the worst crises in its history, the Boulanger campaign and the Panama scandals, while the legislative history records the overthrow of successive cabinets. These followed each other without definite constructive policy, and aimed chiefly at keeping power by constant dickerings and playing off group against group.

The demoralization of parliamentary life had reached a climax. The Republicans were divided into the Moderates, former followers of Gambetta, the Radicals with Floquet and Brisson, the Extreme Left with Clemenceau and Pelletan, the Socialists with Millerand, Basly, and Clovis Hugues. The Royalists and Bonapartists worked against the Government and the Boulangists took advantage of the chaos to push their cause. The Socialists, in particular, were a new group in the Chamber, destined in later years to hold the centre of the stage. In

their manifesto of December, 1887, signed by seventeen Deputies, they advocated, in addition to innumerable specific reforms or practical innovations, schemes for the reorganization of society: state monopolies, nationalization of property, progressive taxation, and the like.

The year 1888, characterized by intense political and social unrest, was critical. The trial and conviction of Grévy's son-in-law Wilson involved washing dirty linen in public. The steady growth of Boulangism testified to dissatisfaction, even though, as it proved, the enemies of the established order had united on a worthless adventurer as their leader.

General Boulanger had been first "invented" as a leader by the extreme Radicals, and especially by Clemenceau, the *démolisseur* or destroyer of ministries. Then, being gradually abandoned by them, he went over to the anti-Republicans and took heavy subsidies from the Monarchists, while continuing to advocate, at least openly, an anti-parliamentary, plebiscitary Republic.

Early in 1888, in February, the candidacy of Boulanger to the Chamber was started in several departments. The electioneering activities

of a general in regular service and sundry deeds of insubordination on his part finally caused the Government, as a disciplinary measure, to retire him. The result was that his partisans raised a cry of persecution, and his actual retirement gave him the liberty to engage in politics which his service on the active list had prevented. In April Boulanger was elected Deputy in the southern department of la Dordogne and the northern le Nord. His plan of campaign was to be candidate for Deputy in each department successively in which a vacancy occurred, thus indirectly and gradually obtaining a plebiscite of approval from the country. At the same time he raised the cry in favor of militarism, not for the sake of war, he said, but for defence. He attacked the impotence of Parliament and, as a remedy, called for the dissolution of the Chamber and the convocation of a Constituent Assembly to revise the constitution. His opponents raised the answering cry of dictatorship and Cæsarism. The election in the Nord was particularly alarming because of Boulanger's majority.

Boulanger now had both Moderates and many Radicals against him, including the



Prime Minister Floquet, and was, on the other hand, supported openly or secretly by the Imperialists and Monarchists, advocates for varying purposes of the plebiscite. The Royalists, who thought their chances of success the most hopeful, wanted to use Boulanger as a tool to further their designs for the overthrow of the Republic. Not only did he receive funds from the pretender, the comte de Paris, but an ardent Royalist lady of rank, the duchesse d'Uzès, squandered millions of francs in furthering Boulanger's political schemes as leader of the Boulangists: the "National Party" or "Revisionists."

In June, 1888, Boulanger brought forward in the Chamber a project for a revision of the constitution. He advocated a single Chamber, or, if a Senate were conceded, demanded that it be chosen by popular vote. The power of the Chamber was to be diminished, that of the President increased, and laws were to be subject to ratification by plebiscite or referendum. The measure was naturally rejected, but Boulanger renewed the attack in July by demanding the dissolution of the Chamber. In the excitement of the debate the lie was passed be-

tween Boulanger and the President of the Council of Ministers, Floquet. Boulanger resigned his seat and in a duel, a few days later, between Floquet and Boulanger, the dashing general, the warrior of the black horse, and the hero of the popular song "En rev'nant d'la revue," was ignominiously wounded by the civilian politician.

But Boulanger's star was not yet on the wane. He continued to be elected Deputy in different departments, and the efforts of the Ministry to cut the ground from under his feet by bringing in a separate revisionary project did not undermine his popularity with the rabble, the jingo Ligue des Patriotes of Paul Déroulède, and the anti-Republican malcontents. In January, 1889, after a fiercely contested and spectacular campaign, he was elected Deputy for the department of the Seine, containing the city of Paris, nerve-centre of France. It is generally conceded that if Boulanger had gone to the Elysée, the presidential mansion, on the evening of his election, and turned out Carnot, he would have had the Parisian populace and the police with him in carrying out a *coup d'état*. Luckily for the country his judg-

ment or his nerve failed him at the crucial moment, and from that time his influence diminished. The panic-stricken Government was able to thwart his plebiscitary appeals by re-establishing the *scrutin d'arrondissement*, or election by small districts instead of by whole departments. Moreover, when the Floquet Cabinet fell soon after on its own revisionary project, the succeeding Tirard Ministry was able to pass a law preventing simultaneous multiple candidacies, and impeached Boulanger, with some of his followers, before the Senate as High Court of Justice. Instead of facing trial, Boulanger and his satellites Dillon and Henri Rochefort fled from France. In August they were condemned in absence to imprisonment. Boulanger never returned to France, and with diminishing subsidies his following waned. The elections of 1889 resulted in the return of only thirty-eight Boulangists and, when in September, 1891, Boulanger committed suicide in Brussels at the grave of his mistress, most Frenchmen merely gave a sigh of relief at the memory of the dangers they had experienced not so long before.

The International Exposition of 1889 af-

forded a breathing spell in the midst of political anxieties, and helped, by its evidence of the Republic's prosperity, to weaken Boulanger's cause. But unsettled social and religious problems remained troublesome. The successive cabinets after the Floquet Ministry, and following the general election of 1889, pursued a policy of "Republican concentration," combining Moderate and Radical elements, disappearing often without important motives, and replaced by cabinets of approximately the same coloring. The Clerical Party was hand-in-glove with the Royalists and the Boulangists. It took advantage of governmental instability to try to undermine the Republic, but its own harmony of purpose was in due time diminished by the new policy of Leo XIII. That astute Italian diplomat was himself temperamentally an Opportunist. He conceived the idea of controlling France by advances to the Republic and by feigning to accept it in order to get hold of its policies, especially the educational and military laws. He realized, too, the harm done to the Vatican by the stubbornness of many French Catholics. He felt the necessity of making amends for the behavior of the



Catholic Royalists in the Boulanger affair. Certain prelates, including the Archbishop of Aix, Monseigneur Gouthe-Soulard, attacked the Government violently at the end of 1891 in connection with disturbances by French pilgrims to Rome who had manifested in favor of the Pope and written "Vive le Pape-Roi!" at the tomb of Victor Emmanuel. The French Catholics tended to resent the interference of the Pope, but the latter, who had for some months received the support of Cardinal Lavigerie, Archbishop of Algiers and Primate of Africa, tried to bring pressure on the leaders of the French clergy. In February, 1892, as a rejoinder to a manifesto by five French cardinals, came his famous encyclical letter advocating the established order of things. "The civil power considered as such is from God and always from God. . . . Consequently, when new governments representing this new power are constituted, to accept them is not only permitted but demanded, or even imposed, by the needs of the social good." This encyclical was followed by a letter to the French cardinals in May and by other manifestations of his wishes. Thus a certain number of Cath-



olics, among whom the comte de Mun and Jacques Piou were leaders, cut adrift from the Right and adhered to the Republic, forming the small group of "Ralliés." They were never very numerous or powerful, and the Dreyfus affair, a few years later, showed how the Pope's desire to rally the Catholics to the Republic was thwarted by the French clergy and the reactionaries.

The procedure of Leo XIII was thus a proof that the Vatican wanted to be on good terms with the Republic. The *rapprochement* with Russia was another proof that France, in spite of its troubles, was to be reckoned with in Europe. France and Russia felt it necessary to draw together in answer to the noisy renewal of the Triple Alliance. There had been tension in the spring of 1891, in which the French were not wholly blameless, as a result of the private visit to Paris of the dowager empress of Germany, the Empress Frederick. In the summer of 1891 a French fleet under Admiral Gervais was invited to Russian waters. It visited Cronstadt, and the Czar and the President exchanged telegrams of sympathy. On the return to France the same fleet visited Ports-

mouth by invitation, and was welcomed by the Queen and the authorities. The visit to England did not, however, have the same meaning as the Russian one. "Portsmouth" meant an expression of England's freedom of action face-to-face with the Triple Alliance, and an endeavor to smooth French susceptibilities recently ruffled by Lord Salisbury. After an Anglo-French compact, in August, 1890, for the partition of protectorates and zones of influence in Africa, the British Prime Minister alluded rather scoffingly in the House of Lords to the lack of value of the Sahara assigned to the French. "Cronstadt," as opposed to "Portsmouth," meant an active understanding, to be followed in 1892 by a military defensive compact negotiated in St. Petersburg by General de Boisdeffre, head of the French General Staff.

The return visit of the Russians took place at Toulon in 1893, and Admiral Avellan with his staff visited Paris, which went wild with enthusiasm. At that moment French relations with Italy were strained, partly because the Italian Government was jealous of the cordiality between the Pope and the Republic.

The Franco-Russian manifestation was a new veiled warning.

In 1892, under the leadership of Jules Méline, the Chamber adopted a protective tariff policy. This resulted in several tariff disputes and engendered bad feeling with various countries, including Italy.

The desperate attack of the Royalists, engineered mainly against the Republic in the Panama scandals, helped to bring the Pope and the State still closer together, so that at certain times the Ralliés or Republican Catholics and the Royalists fought each other violently. The Panama scandal was planned in view of the elections of 1893. During the decade following 1880 Ferdinand de Lesseps, the successful builder of the Suez Canal, had organized and tried to finance a company to construct a canal at Panama. The prestige of Lesseps's name and the memory of his previous achievement made countless Frenchmen invest huge sums in the company. But the expenses were enormous and the financial maladministration apparently extraordinary, for the directors of the company were led into illegal steps in order to influence legislation, or pay hush

money to the press to hide the condition of affairs, and then were blackmailed into further outlays. The company failed in 1888, and efforts to put it on its feet proved abortive. Hints of the scandals leaked out, and the Government played into the hands of its opponents by trying to conceal matters.

In November, 1892, some Royalist members of the Chamber brought matters to a head and the Government was obliged to do something. It was decided to proceed against Ferdinand de Lesseps, his son Charles de Lesseps, Henri Cottu, Marius Fontane, members of the board of directors, and G. Eiffel, an engineer and contractor and the builder of the famous Eiffel Tower. At this juncture a well-known Jewish banker of Paris, Baron Jacques de Reinach, died suddenly and most mysteriously on November 20. He was openly charged with being the bribery agent of the company, and his sudden death was by some called suicide, while others hinted that he had been put out of the way because of his dangerous knowledge.

Under these exciting conditions a Boulangist Deputy named Delahaye made an inter-



pellation in the Chamber hinting at the campaign of corruption carried on by the company through the agency of Reinach and two other Jews of German origin, Arton and Cornelius Herz, the latter a naturalized American citizen. By this campaign it was charged that three million francs had been used to corrupt more than a hundred and fifty Deputies, and much more had been spent in other ways.

A commission of thirty-three was appointed under the chairmanship of Henri Brisson. The Royalists and Radicals were having their innings against the Government, and their newspapers continued to publish rumors and "revelations." The commission called for the autopsy of Reinach. The Loubet Cabinet, refusing to grant it, was voted down and resigned. The Ribot Ministry was then constituted, but at intervals lost successively two of its most prominent members, Rouvier and Freycinet, accused of complicity in the scandals. Even the leaders of the Radicals, Clemenceau and Floquet, in time found themselves involved. The former was charged with tricky dealings with Cornelius Herz, the latter was shown to have demanded money from the company,



when Minister, in order to use it for political subsidies.

In December the Cabinet decided to arrest Charles de Lesseps, Marius Fontane, Henri Cottu, and a former Deputy, Sans-Leroy, accused of having accepted a bribe of two hundred thousand francs. At the same time, on the basis of the seizure of twenty-six cheque stubs at the bank used by the baron de Reinach, the Minister of Justice proceeded against ten prominent Deputies and Senators, among whom was Albert Grévy, former Governor-General of Algeria, and brother of Jules Grévy. The Government seemed panic-stricken in its readiness to sacrifice, on mere suspicion, prominent members of its party. All the parliamentaries accused were, in due time, exonerated.

The directors of the company came up for trial twice. The first time, with M. Eiffel, in January-February, 1893, and the second time, with other defendants, in March, before different jurisdictions on varying charges, they were condemned to fine and imprisonment. On appeal, in April, these condemnations were revised or annulled. One person became the scapegoat, a former Minister of Public Works

named Baihaut, condemned to civil degradation, five years' imprisonment, and a heavy fine.

Scandal was, however, not satisfied with these names. There was also talk of a mysterious list of one hundred and four Deputies charged with accepting bribes from Arton. Moreover, it was felt that quashing the indictments against prominent men like Rouvier and Albert Grévy was poor policy. If they were innocent they could prove their innocence. Under the circumstances suspicion would still be rife. The state of general anarchy was also revealed by the evidence of the wife of Henri Cottu, who testified that agents of the Government had offered her husband immunity if he would implicate a member of the Opposition.<sup>1</sup>

The Panama scandal was largely the work

<sup>1</sup> The Panama affair was a violent shock to the Republic. People were amazed at the charges of widespread corruption and the tendency on the part of the Government to smooth things over. Suspicions aroused were not fully satisfied because Reinach was dead and Herz and Arton in flight. Cornelius Herz successfully fought extradition from England on the plea of illness. Arton was arrested in 1895 and extradited. His arrest caused a renewal of talk about Panama and the newspaper *la France* undertook to print the famous list of one hundred and four Deputies. This publication was recognized to be a case of blackmail and its promoters were punished. Arton was also condemned to a term of hard labor, but his trial did not bring out the longed-for revelations.

of the Monarchists angry at the failure of the Boulanger campaign. It did them no good, as the elections to the new Chamber proved. On the other hand, it worked havoc among the leaders of the Moderates, who, innocent or blameworthy, fell under popular suspicion, and were in many cases relegated to the background in favor of new leaders. Moreover, it helped the Socialists, and even, by throwing discredit on parliamentarism, it encouraged lawless outbreaks of anarchists.

New men in party leaderships came in the composite Cabinet of Moderate leanings led by Charles Dupuy in April, 1893. He seemed at first to incline toward the Conservatives and treated with considerable severity some street disturbances. A prank of art students at their annual ball (*Bal des quat'-z-arts*) was magnified into a street riot and was not quelled until after the loss of a life. The *Bourse du travail* (Workmen's Exchange) was closed by the Government after other disturbances.

The elections in August and September resulted in a large Republican majority and a corresponding decline in the anti-Republican Right. On the other hand, the Radicals rose to

about a hundred and fifty, and the Socialists were about fifty, forming for the first time a large party able to make its influence felt. The "Socialistic-Radicals" represented an effort toward a compromise between the advanced groups.

The desire of the Moderate leaders of the Republic to meet the Pope halfway in his policy of conciliation was expressed in a noteworthy speech made in the Chamber in March, 1894, by the then Minister of Public Worship, Eugène Spuller. Answering the query of a Royalist Deputy, the Minister declared that the time had come to put an end to fanaticism and sectarianism, and that the country could count on the vigilance of the Government to maintain its rights, and on the new frame of mind (*esprit nouveau*) which inspired it, which tended to reconcile all French citizens and bring about a revival of common sense, justice, and charity.

But the anarchists were not moved by any spirit of conciliation. Borrowing methods of violence from the Russian nihilists, they used bomb-throwing to draw attention to the vices of social organization and to themselves. Dur-



ing 1892, 1893, and 1894 they tried to terrorize Paris. The deeds of various criminals, including Ravachol, Vaillant (who threw a bomb in the Chamber of Deputies),<sup>1</sup> Emile Henry, among others, culminated at last in the cruel murder of President Carnot. On June 24, 1894, while at Lyons, whither he had gone to pay a state visit to an international exhibition, President Carnot was fatally stabbed by an underwitted Italian anarchist named Caserio Santo, and died within a few hours. Never were more futile and abominable crimes committed than those which sacrificed Carnot and McKinley.

<sup>1</sup> M. Dupuy, then President of the Chamber, got much credit for his calmness and his remark, as the smoke of the bomb cleared away, "La séance continue."



## CHAPTER VII

### THE ADMINISTRATIONS OF JEAN CASIMIR-PERIER

June, 1894, to January, 1895

### AND OF FÉLIX FAURE

January, 1895, to February, 1899

THE customary promptness in the choice of a President, so unfamiliar to American campaigns, was observed in the election of Carnot's successor. The historic name and the social and financial position of the new chief magistrate, Jean Casimir-Perier, seemed to the monarchical sister-nations a guarantee of national stability and dignity. In reality the election brought about a more definite cleavage between rival political tendencies. Casimir-Perier, grandson of Louis-Philippe's great minister, obviously represented the Moderates, most of whom tried in all sincerity to carry out the *esprit nouveau* and a policy of good-will toward the Catholic Church. The Radicals said that this was playing into the hands of the Clericals, and to the Socialists Casimir-Perier was merely a hated capitalist. He was, more-

over, unfortunately unfit for the acrimonies of political life. High-strung and emotional, he writhed under misinterpretation and abuse, and rebelled against the constitutional powerlessness of his office. He had never really wanted the Presidency and had accepted it chiefly through the personal persuasion of his friend the statesman Burdeau, who unfortunately died soon after his election. The brief Presidency of Casimir-Perier, lasting less than a year, was destined to see the beginning of the worst trial the French Republic had yet experienced, the famous Dreyfus case.

The Administration, in which Dupuy remained Prime Minister, began by repressive measures, laws directed against the anarchists and the trial *en masse* of thirty defendants ranging from utopian theorists to actual criminals. Most of them were acquitted, but the procedure did not ingratiate the Government with the advanced parties. Toward the end of 1894 the Dreyfus case began to be talked of, an affair which was destined to develop into a tremendous struggle of the leaders of the army and the Church to obtain control of the nation.

In September, 1894, an officer named Henry,

of the spy service of the French army, came into possession of a document pieced together from fragments stolen from a waste-paper basket in the German Embassy. This document, containing a *bordereau* or memorandum of information largely about the French artillery offered to the German military attaché, Schwartzkoppen, was anonymous, but Henry undoubtedly recognized, sooner or later, the handwriting of a friend, Major Esterhazy, a soldier of fortune in the French army, of bad reputation and shady character. Unable to destroy the document, which had been seen by others, Henry tried to fasten it on somebody else. Indeed, many people believe that Henry was an accomplice of Esterhazy in German pay. By a strange coincidence it happened that the handwriting of the *bordereau* somewhat resembled that of a brilliant young Jewish officer of the General Staff named Alfred Dreyfus. He belonged to a wealthy Alsatian family, and from antecedent probability would not seem to need to play a traitor's part, but he was intensely unpopular among his fellows because of many disagreeable traits of character. Moreover, anti-Semitism, formerly non-existent in

France, was now rife. It had been largely fomented by the anti-Jewish agitator Edouard Drumont, with his book *la France juive* (1886) and his newspaper the *Libre Parole* (1892). Prejudice against the Jews as tricky financiers had been prepared and encouraged by the sensational failure of the great bank, the Union générale, a Catholic rival of the Rothschilds, in 1882, and by the Panama scandals with the doings of Jacques de Reinach, Cornelius Herz, and Arton. The *Libre Parole* had worked against Jewish officers in the army, an activity which culminated in some sensational duels, particularly one between Captain Mayer and the marquis de Morès (1892), in which the Jew was killed.

So, in the present instance, the Minister of War, General Mercier, who had recently committed some much-criticized administrative blunders, and who now wished to show his efficiency, caused the arrest of Dreyfus. Then, egged on by anti-Semitic newspapers which had got hold of Dreyfus's name, Mercier brought him before a court-martial. The trial was held in secret, and the War Department sent to the officers constituting the tribunal,



without the knowledge of the prisoner or his counsel Maître Demange, a secret *dossier*, a collection of trumped-up incriminating documents. Demange devoted himself to proving that Dreyfus was not the author of the *bordereau*, but the members of the court-martial, believing in the genuineness of the additional documents, unhesitatingly convicted him of treason. Consequently, in spite of his protestations of innocence, Dreyfus was publicly degraded on January 5, 1895, and hustled off to solitary confinement on the unhealthy Devil's Isle, off the coast of French Guiana. Meanwhile the whole French people sincerely believed that a vile traitor had been justly condemned and that the secrecy of the case was due to the advisability of avoiding diplomatic complications with Germany. With dramatic unexpectedness, only ten days later (January 15), Casimir-Perier resigned the Presidency.

During the whole Dreyfus affair Casimir-Perier had chafed because his ministers had constantly acted without keeping him informed, particularly when he was called upon by the German Government to acknowledge that it



had had nothing to do with Dreyfus. He had lost by death the support of his friend Burdeau; he was discouraged by the campaign of abuse against him, especially the election as Deputy in Paris of Gérault-Richard, one of his most active vilifiers. In particular he felt that his own Cabinet, and above all its leader Dupuy, were false to him. A discussion in the Chamber concerning the duration of the state guarantees to certain of the great railway companies ended in a vote unfavorable to the Cabinet, which resigned, whereupon Casimir-Perier seized the opportunity to go too. The Socialists declared that Dupuy had provoked his own defeat in order to embarrass the President by the difficulty of forming a new Cabinet, and make him resign as well.

Two days later the electoral Congress met at Versailles. The Radicals supported Henri Brisson. The Moderates and the Conservatives were divided between Waldeck-Rousseau and Félix Faure, but Waldeck-Rousseau having thrown his strength on the second ballot to Faure, the latter was elected.

The new President, recently Minister of the Navy, was a well-meaning man, but full of

vanity and naïvely delighted with his own rise in the world from a humble position to that of chief magistrate. The extent to which his judgment was warped by his temperament is shown by the later developments of the Dreyfus case.

Félix Faure's first Cabinet was led by the Republican Moderate Alexandre Ribot. It lasted less than a year and its history was chiefly noteworthy, at least in foreign affairs, by the increasing openness of the Franco-Russian *rapprochement* at the ceremonies of the inauguration of the Kiel Canal. In internal affairs there were some violent industrial disturbances and strikes.

In October, 1895, the Moderates gave way to the Radical Cabinet of Léon Bourgeois. It was viewed with suspicion by the moneyed interests, who accused it of gravitating toward the Socialists. The cleavage between the two tendencies of the Republican Party became more marked. The Moderates joined forces with the Conservatives to oppose the schemes for social and financial reforms of the Radicals and of the representatives of the working classes. Prominent among these was the proposal for a progressive income tax. The Senate, natu-

rally a more conservative body, was opposed to the Bourgeois Cabinet, which had a majority, though not a very steadfast one, in the Chamber of Deputies. The Senate, usually a nonentity in determining the fall of a cabinet, for once successfully asserted its power and, by refusing to vote the credits asked for by the Ministry for the Madagascar campaign, caused it to resign in April, 1896. The enemies of the Senate maintained that the Chamber of Deputies, elected by direct suffrage, was the only judge of the fate of a cabinet. But Bourgeois's hold was at best precarious and he seized the opportunity to withdraw.

The Méline Cabinet which followed was a return to the Moderates supported by the Conservatives. Its opponents accused it of following what in American political parlance is called a "stand-pat" policy, but it remained in office longer than any ministry up to its time, a little over two years. It afforded, at any rate, an opportunity for the adversaries of the Republic to strengthen their positions and encouraged the transformation of the Dreyfus case into a political instead of a purely judicial matter.

In foreign affairs the most spectacular events were the visit of the Czar and Czarina to France in 1896 and the return visit of the French President to Russia in 1897. At the banquet of leave-taking on the French warship *Pothuau*, in their prepared speeches, the Czar and the President made use of the same expression "friendly and *allied* nations," thus publicly proclaiming to Europe the alliance suspected since 1891.

In spite of the unanimous feeling of Dreyfus's guilt, his family did not lose faith in him, and his brother Mathieu set about the apparently impossible task of rehabilitation. But it chanced that one other person began to have doubts of the justice of Dreyfus's condemnation. This was Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart, who had been present at the court-martial as representative of the War Department, and who had since become chief of the espionage service, and Henry's superior. Another document stolen from a waste-paper basket at the German Embassy, an unforwarded pneumatic despatch (*petit bleu*), was brought to him, and directed his suspicions to Esterhazy, to whom it was addressed. At first he did not connect



Esterhazy and Dreyfus, but on obtaining specimens of Esterhazy's handwriting he was struck by the likeness with that of the *bordereau*. Then, examining the secret *dossier*, to which he now had access, he was stupefied to see its insignificance.

From this time on, Picquart worked, with extraordinary tenacity of purpose and against all obstacles, for the rehabilitation of a stranger. Everybody was against him. His chief subordinate Henry dreaded revelations above all things, and set his colleagues against him. His superiors disliked any suggestion that an army court could have made a mistake, the remedying of which would help a Jew.

Gradually, however, the agitation started by Mathieu Dreyfus was becoming stronger. He had won the help of a skilled writer Bernard Lazare; a daily paper succeeded in obtaining and publishing a facsimile of the *bordereau*. But Picquart was sent away from Paris on a tour of inspection, and when the matter came up in the Chamber, through an interpellation, the Minister of War, General Billot, declared that the judgment of 1894 was absolutely legal and just. Matters thus seemed settled again.





MARIE-GEORGES PICQUART



But a prominent Alsatian member of Parliament, Scheurer-Kestner, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Senate, was half-persuaded by Mathieu and Bernard Lazare. When Picquart's friend and legal adviser, Leblois, rather injudiciously, from a professional point of view, confided to him his client's suspicions, he was thoroughly convinced and the two separate currents of activity now coalesced. Yet the greater the agitation in favor of Dreyfus, the greater grew the opposition. The anti-Semites shrieked with rage against Judas, the "traitor." The upper ranks of the army were honeycombed by Clerical influences. An enormous proportion of the officers belonged to reactionary families and the Chief of Staff himself, General de Boisdeffre, was under the thumb of the Père Du Lac, one of the most prominent Jesuits in France. The Clericals and anti-Semites, therefore, joined forces, and, by calling the Dreyfus agitation an attack on the honor of the army and a play into the hands of Germany, they won over all the jingoes and former Boulangists, who formed the new party of Nationalists. This was the so-called alliance of "the sword and the holy-water sprinkler"

(*le sabre et le goupillon*). Above all, certain religious associations, particularly the Assumptionists, under the name of religion, organized a campaign of slander and abuse against all who ventured to speak for Dreyfus. By a ludicrous counter-play the scoundrel Esterhazy had defenders as an injured innocent, the more so that Henry and the clique at the War Office found it to their interest to support him.

Matters reached a crisis when, on November 15, 1897, Mathieu Dreyfus denounced Esterhazy to the Minister of War as author of the *bordereau* and as guilty of the treason for which his brother had been condemned. This was partly a tactical mistake, because, even if Esterhazy were proved to have written the *bordereau*, it would still be necessary to show him guilty of actual treason. It made it possible to swerve the discussion from the conviction of Dreyfus as a *res adjudicata* (*chose jugée*) to vague charges against Esterhazy. The later called for a vindication, he was triumphantly acquitted by a court-martial early in January, 1898, and Picquart was put under arrest on various charges of indiscipline in connection with the whole affair.

Few and far between as they now seemed, the lovers of justice were still to be counted with. They consisted at first of a small number of much-derided *intellectuels*, scholars and trained thinkers, who used their judgment and not their prejudices. One of these was the famous novelist Emile Zola, who, to keep the case under discussion, published in the *Aurore* on January 13, a few days after Esterhazy's acquittal, his famous letter, *J'accuse*. In this article Zola denounced the guilty machinations of Dreyfus's adversaries *seriatim*, blamed the Dreyfus court-martial for convicting on secret evidence and the Esterhazy court for acquitting a guilty man in obedience to orders. Zola was not in possession of all the facts, since his precise aim was to have them brought out, and in his charges against the Esterhazy court he was technically and legally at fault. But he courted prosecution and got it.

On February 7 Zola was brought to trial. The crafty authorities eliminated all references to the trial of 1894 as a *chose jugée* and prosecuted Zola for having declared that Esterhazy was acquitted by order. Their tool, the presiding magistrate Delegorgue, seconded their



efforts by ruling out every question which might throw light on the Dreyfus case, in spite of the attempts of Zola's chief lawyer Labori. Party passion was at its height, hired gangs of men were posted about the court-house to hoot and attack the Dreyfusites, members of the General Staff appeared in full uniform to interrupt the trial and bulldoze the jury by mysterious hints of war with Germany. Finally Zola was condemned to fine and imprisonment. At this trial for the first time mention was mysteriously but openly made of a new document, understood to be a communication alluding to Dreyfus between the Italian and the German military *attachés* at Paris. Zola appealed, the higher court broke the verdict on the ground that the prosecution should have been instigated by the offended court-martial and not by the Government, he was brought to trial again on a change of venue at Versailles, was unsuccessful in interposing obstacles to an inevitable condemnation, and so fled to England (July).

Meanwhile, public opinion was becoming yet more violently excited. France was divided into two great camps, the line of cleavage often

estranging the closest friends and relatives. On the one side was a vast majority consisting of the Clericals, the jingoes or Nationalists, the anti-Semites, and the unreflecting mass of the population. On the other were ranged the "intellectuals," the Socialists who were now rallying to the cause of tolerance, the Jews, and the few French Protestants. The League of the Rights of Man stood opposed to the association of the *Patrie Française*. In the midst of this turmoil were held the elections of May, 1898, for the renewal of the Chamber of Deputies. The political coloring of the new body was not sensibly changed, but the open Dreyfusites were all excluded. The Moderates now generally dubbed themselves "Progressists." None the less at the first session the now long-lived Méline Cabinet resigned after a vote requesting it to govern with fewer concessions to the Right.

The next Cabinet was Radical, headed by Henri Brisson. His mind was not yet definitely made up on the matter of revision, and he gave concessions to the Nationalists by appointing as Minister of War Godefroy Cavaignac. This headstrong personage, proud of an historic

name, undertook to manage the Cabinet and to prove once for all to the Chamber the guilt of Dreyfus. In his speech he relied mainly on the letter mentioned at the Zola trial as written by the Italian to the German *attaché*.

Once more the Dreyfus affair seemed permanently settled, and once more the contrary proved to be the case. In August Cavaignac discovered, to his dismay, that the document he had sent to the Chamber, with such emphasis on its importance, was an out-and-out forgery of Henry. The latter was put under arrest and committed suicide. Discussion followed between Brisson, now converted to revision, and Cavaignac, still too stubborn to change his mind with regard to Dreyfus, in spite of his recent discovery. Cavaignac resigned as Minister of War, was replaced by General Zurlinden, who withdrew in a few days and was in turn succeeded by another general, Chanoine, thought to be in sympathy with the Cabinet. He in turn played his colleagues false and resigned unexpectedly during a meeting of the Chamber. Weakened by these successive blows the Brisson Cabinet itself had to resign, but its leader had now

forwarded to the supreme court of the land, the Cour de Cassation, the petition of Dreyfus's wife for a revision of his sentence. The first step had at last been taken. The Criminal Chamber accepted the request and proceeded to a further detailed investigation.

The Brisson Ministry was followed by a third Cabinet of the unabashed Dupuy. It became evident that the Criminal Chamber of the Court of Cassation was inclining to decide on revision. Wishing to play to both sides and, yielding in this case to the anti-revisionists, early in 1899 Dupuy brought in a bill to take the Dreyfus affair away from the Criminal Chamber in the very midst of its deliberations and submit it to the Court as a whole, where it was hoped a majority of judges would reject revision. Between the dates of the passage of this bill by the Chamber and by the Senate, President Faure died suddenly and under mysterious circumstances on February 16, 1899. He had opposed revision and his death, attributed to apoplexy, was a gain to the revisionists who were accused by his friends of having caused his murder. On the other hand, stories, which it is unnecessary to repeat here,



found an echo some years later in the scandals repeated at the sensational trial of Madame Steinheil.

During the turmoil over the Dreyfus affair, France underwent a humiliating experience with England. The colonial rivalry of the two countries had of late gone on unchecked, embittered as it had been by the ousting of France from the Suez Canal and Egypt. To many Frenchmen "Perfidious Albion" was, far more than Germany, the secular foe. In 1896 a French expedition under Captain Marchand was sent from the Congo in the direction of the Nile. The English afterwards argued that its purpose was to cut their sphere of influence and hinder the Cape-to-Cairo project; the French declared they merely wished to occupy a post which should afford a basis for general diplomatic negotiations for the partition of Africa. The mission was numerically insufficient; it struggled painfully for two years through the heart of the continent, and at last the small handful of intrepid Frenchmen established themselves at Fashoda on the upper waters of the Nile in July, 1898. At once General Kitchener arriving from the victory of Omdur-



man appeared on the scene to occupy Fashoda for the Egyptian Government. England assumed a viciously aggressive attitude and, under veiled threats of war, France was obliged to recall Marchand (November 4). The outburst of fury in France against England at this humiliation was tremendous. No sane man would have then ventured to predict that in a few years the hands of the two countries would be joined in the clasp of the *Entente cordiale*.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ADMINISTRATION OF EMILE LOUBET

February, 1899, to February, 1906

THE successor of Félix Faure, Emile Loubet, was elected on February 18, 1899, by a good majority over Jules Méline, the candidate of the larger number of the Moderates or "Progressists" and of the Conservatives. Loubet was himself a man of Moderate views, but he was thought to favor a revision of the Dreyfus case. Among the charges of his enemies was that, as Minister of the Interior in 1892, he had held, but had kept secret, the famous list of the "Hundred and Four" and had prevented the seizure of the papers of Baron de Reinach and the arrest of Arton. So Loubet's return to Paris from Versailles was amid hostile cries of "Loubet-Panama" and "Vive l'armée!"

On February 23, after the state funeral of President Faure, a detachment of troops led by General Roget was returning to its barracks in an outlying quarter of Paris. Suddenly the Nationalist and quondam Boulangist

Paul Déroulède, now chief of the *Ligue des Patriotes* and vigorous opponent of parliamentary government, though a Deputy himself, rushed to General Roget, and, grasping the bridle of his horse, tried to persuade him to lead his troops to the Elysée, the presidential residence, and overthrow the Government. Déroulède had expected to encounter General de Pellieux, a more amenable leader, and one of the noisy generals at the Zola trial. General Roget, who had been substituted at the last moment, refused to accede and caused the arrest of Déroulède, with his fellow Deputy and conspirator Marcel Habert.

Meanwhile the Dreyfus case had been taken out of the hands of the Criminal Chamber and given to the whole Court. To the dismay of the anti-Dreyfusites the Court, as a body, annulled, on June 3, the verdict of the court-martial of 1894, and decided that Dreyfus should appear before a second military court at Rennes for another trial.

Thus party antagonisms were becoming more and more acute. In addition Dupuy, the head of the Cabinet, seemed to be spiting the new President. On the day after the verdict

of the Cour de Cassation, at the Auteuil races, President Loubet was roughly jostled by a band of fashionable young Royalists and struck with a cane by Baron de Christiani. A week later, at the Grand Prize races at Longchamps, on June 11, Dupuy, as though to atone for his previous carelessness, brought out a large array of troops, so obviously over-numerous as to cause new disturbances among the crowd desirous of manifesting its sympathy with the chief magistrate. More arrests were made and, at the meeting of the Chamber of Deputies the next day, the Cabinet was overthrown by an adverse vote.

The ministerial crisis brought about by the fall of Dupuy was as important as any under the Third Republic because of its consequences in the redistribution of parties. For about ten days President Loubet was unable to find a leader who could in turn form a cabinet. At last public opinion was astounded by the masterly combination made by Waldeck-Rousseau, Gambetta's former lieutenant, who of recent years had kept somewhat aloof from active participation in politics. He brought together a ministry of "défense républicaine," which its



RENÉ WALDECK-ROUSSEAU





opponents, however, called a cabinet for the "liquidation" of the Dreyfus case. The old policy of "Republican concentration" of Opportunists and Radicals was given up in favor of a mass formation of the various advanced groups of the Left, including the Socialists.

Waldeck-Rousseau was a Moderate Republican, whose legal practice of recent years had been mainly that of a corporation lawyer, but he was a cool-headed Opportunist. He realized the ill-success of the policy of the "esprit nouveau," and saw the necessity of making advances to the Socialists, who more and more held the balance of power. He succeeded in uniting in his Cabinet Moderates like himself, Radicals, and, for the first time in French parliamentary history, an out-and-out Socialist, Alexandre Millerand, author of the famous "Programme of Saint-Mand " of 1896, or declaration of faith of Socialism. Still more astounding was the presence as Minister of War, in the same Cabinet with Millerand, of General de Galliffet, a bluff, outspoken, and dashing aristocratic officer, a favorite with the whole army, but fiercely hated by the prole-

tariat because of his part in the repression of the Commune.

The first days of the new Cabinet were stormy and its outlook was dubious. The task of reconciling such divergent elements, even against a common foe, seemed an impossibility, until at last the Radicals under Brisson swung into line. Such was the beginning of a Republican grouping which later, during the anti-Clerical campaign, was known as *le Bloc*, the united band of Republicans.

The Waldeck-Rousseau Ministry took up the Dreyfus case with a queer combination of courage and weakness. Insubordinate army officers were summarily punished for injudicious remarks, but in order to appear neutral and to avoid criticism, the Cabinet held so much aloof that the anti-Dreyfusites were able to bring their full forces to bear on the court-martial. For a month at Rennes, beginning August 7, an extraordinary trial was carried on before the eyes of an impassioned France and angry onlooking nations. Witnesses had full latitude to indulge in rhetorical addresses and air their prejudices; military officers like Roget, who had had nothing to do with the original

trial, were allowed to take up the time of the court. Galliffet, though convinced of the innocence of Dreyfus, was unwilling to exert as much pressure as his colleagues in the Cabinet desired. It soon became evident that, regardless of the question involved, the issue was one between an insignificant Jewish officer on the one hand and General Mercier, ex-Minister of War, on the other. The judges were army officers full of caste-feeling and timorous of offending their superiors. Thus, on September 9, Dreyfus was a second time convicted, though with extenuating circumstances, by a vote of 5 to 2, and condemned to ten years' detention. This verdict was a travesty of justice, and a punishment fitting no crime of Dreyfus, since he was either innocent or guilty of treason beyond extenuation. The Ministry, perhaps regretting too late its excessive inertia, immediately caused the President to pardon Dreyfus, partly on the ostensible grounds that Dreyfus by his previous harsher condemnation had already purged his new one. This act of clemency was, however, not a legal clearing of the victim's honor, which was achieved only some years later.

During the turmoil of the Dreyfus affair the Cabinet was, it seemed to many, unduly anxious over certain conspirators against the Republic. The symptoms of insubordination in high ranks in the army, linked with the Clerical manoeuvres, had encouraged the other foes of the Republic (spurred on by the Royalists), whether sincere opponents of the parliamentary régime like Paul Déroulède, or venal agitators such as the anti-Semitic Jules Guérin. But, certainly, above all objectionable were the proceedings of the Assumptionists, a religious order which had amassed enormous wealth, and which, by the various local editions of its paper *la Croix*, had organized a campaign of venomous slander and abuse of the Republic and its leaders.

The Government, having got wind of a project of the conspirators to seize the reins of power during the Rennes court-martial, anticipated the act by wholesale arrests on August 12. Jules Guérin barricaded himself with some friends in a house in the rue de Chabrol in Paris, and defied the Government to arrest him without perpetrating murder. The grotesque incident of the "Fort Chabrol" came to



an end after thirty-seven days when the authorities had surrounded the house with troops to starve Guérin out and stopped the drains.

In November a motley array of conspirators, ranging from André Buffet, representative of the pretender the Duke of Orléans, to butchers from the slaughter-houses of La Villette, were brought to trial before the Senate acting as a High Court of Justice, on the charge of conspiracy against the State. After a long trial lasting nearly two months, during which the prisoners outdid each other in declamatory insults to their enemies, the majority were acquitted. Paul Déroulède and André Buffet were condemned to banishment for ten years and Jules Guérin to imprisonment for the same term. Two others, Marcel Habert and the comte de Lur-Saluces, who had taken flight, gave themselves up later and were condemned in 1900 and 1901, respectively, amid a public indifference which was far from their liking.

Thus the year 1899 had proved itself one of the most dramatically eventful in the history of the Republic. It was also to be one of the most significant in its consequences. For the new grouping of mutually jealous factions

against a common danger had, in spite of the fiasco of the second Dreyfus case, shown a way to victory. And exasperation against the intrigues of the Clericals and the army officers was going to turn the former toleration of the "esprit nouveau" into active persecution, especially as the Socialists and Radicals formed the majority of the new combination.

In November, 1899, Waldeck-Rousseau laid before Parliament an Associations bill to regulate the organization of societies, which was intended indirectly to control religious bodies. The leniency of the Government hitherto and the commercial energy of many religious orders, manufacturers of articles varying from chartreuse to hair-restorers and dentifrice, had enabled them to amass enormous sums held in mortmain. The power of this money was great in politics and the anti-Clericals cast envious eyes on these vague and mysterious fortunes. There were in France at the time almost seven hundred unauthorized "congregations." Against the Assumptionists in particular the Government took direct measures early in 1900, such as legal perquisitions, arrests, and prosecution as an illegal association.

The campaign went on through the year 1900, the Exposition of that year helping to act as a partial truce. The expedition of the Allies to China to put down the Boxer rebellion also diverted attention. Waldeck-Rousseau was sincerely desirous of bringing about a pacification of feeling in the country, and he felt bitter practically only against the Jesuits and the Assumptionists. He even succeeded in carrying through Parliament an amnesty bill dealing with the Dreyfus case and destined to quash all criminal actions in process, whether of Dreyfusites or anti-Dreyfusites. The former fought the project vigorously on the ground that it opposed a new obstacle to ultimate discovery of the truth, but they were unsuccessful. Waldeck-Rousseau remained at heart, none the less, a believer in Dreyfus's innocence and in spite of his amnesty project, he could not always hide his true feelings. In consequence he offended his Minister of War, General de Galliffet, Dreyfusite as well, but tired of the struggle now that the Rennes trial had made the task of rehabilitation apparently, hopeless. Galliffet resigned his office and was succeeded by General André, a politician sol-

dier, who started out at once to purge the army drastically of its Clericalism.

Waldeck-Rousseau's Associations project was fairly mild. He had no desire for a violent break with the Vatican, and the wily and diplomatic Leo XIII probably so understood well enough in spite of his protests. But, as debate and discussion went on, the measure became more severe. Waldeck-Rousseau had originally planned a bill dealing with authorization and incorporation of associations in general, in which he refrained from any specific allusion to religious bodies of monks and nuns, thereby assimilating them with other groups. As finally voted and promulgated in July, 1901, the law made provisions for the privilege of association in general, but made the important additional stipulations that no religious order or "congregation" could be formed without specific authorization by law, that a religious order could be dissolved by ministerial decree, and that no one belonging to an unauthorized order could direct personally, or by proxy, an educational establishment, or even teach in one. Thus the enemies of the lay Republic who, under cover of the "*esprit nouveau*," and



by years of manipulation of the feeding sources of army and navy officers, had hoped to grasp power, and had made a supreme effort at the time of the Dreyfus agitation, now saw themselves thwarted, and faced the prospect of severer treatment.

Matters had progressed even further than Waldeck-Rousseau himself perhaps desired. In the spring of 1902, new legislative elections took place for the renewal of the Chamber of Deputies. The policy of the Waldeck-Rousseau Ministry was endorsed by a sound majority, and yet at this moment of triumph, after the longest rule as Prime Minister of any hitherto in the history of the Republic, Waldeck-Rousseau resigned his post without an adverse vote. Undoubtedly the state of his personal health was partly responsible for his departure from office and he was destined not to live beyond 1904. The last important events of his administration were a visit of the Czar to France and a return visit of President Loubet to Russia.

Waldeck-Rousseau's successor as Prime Minister was Emile Combes, a strong foe of the Church. Combes had himself been a former



theological student and had, in his youth, written a thesis on the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas. He now had all the vindictiveness of one who burns what he formerly worshipped. Encouraged by the recent elections, he turned more and more against the Vatican and impelled by the more violent members of the *Bloc*, he drifted toward the rupture which his predecessor had tried to avoid. A committee of the different groups supporting the Cabinet, called the "délégation des gauches," had in time been instituted to formulate policies with the Prime Minister, who often had to obey it instead of guiding. Waldeck-Rousseau had intended not to apply his law retroactively. He had planned to spare educational establishments already in existence before July, 1901, when his measure went into operation, and had winked at lack of compliance on the part of many others. Combes applied the letter of the law ruthlessly. Amid public protestations and disturbances he closed a large number of these unauthorized schools; firstly, those which had actually been opened without permission since the promulgation of the law, then the many schools which were older than the law.

In so doing he was called a persecutor, because the directors of the schools declared that they had allowed the time limit of application for authorization to go by, only through the understanding with the previous Administration that they were not to be interfered with. Now they could not help themselves.

Emboldened by success Combes next took up the applications of the congregations which had duly followed the law and were seeking authorization. By decree, as was his right, he first promptly closed unlicensed schools of recognized orders. Then came the applications of orders seeking authorization. Legal procedure demanded laws to reject as well as laws to accept applications. A recommendation *favoured* by the Government but *rejected* by the Chamber of Deputies would not go before the Senate. On the other hand, an *unfavorable* opinion of the Government *ratified* by the House would still have to go before the Senate. A way would thus be open for prolonged chicanery.

Combes cut matters short. He lumped fifty-four individual applications into three batches, teaching orders, preaching orders, and the com-

mercial order of the Chartreux, manufacturers of the liqueur called "chartreuse." Then, presenting these batches of applications collectively instead of individually to the Chamber, he caused their rejection and proceeded to dissolve the orders and close their fifteen hundred establishments. Through the spring of 1903 there were turbulent scenes in consequence in various parts of France, the monks trying sometimes passive resistance, sometimes actual violence. In the reactionary districts the population attempted to stir up riots. Occasionally, even, a military officer whose duty it was to evict the monks refused to obey orders. But, nothing daunted, Combes went on, with the support of the Chambers, to reject a large mass of applications from teaching orders of women. Even Waldeck-Rousseau was led in time publicly to declare that he had never contemplated the transformation of his Associations law of 1901 from a measure of regulation to one of exclusion, nor the assumption by the State of expensive educational charges hitherto carried on by religious orders. At last the law of July, 1904, put a complete end to all kinds of instruction by religious

bodies, thereby insuring, after a lapse of time for liquidation, the disappearance of all teaching orders.

These measures against the religious groups were, in spite of outcries of persecution, after all matters of internal administration. But, meanwhile, causes for direct dissension with the Vatican had arisen over questions involving the *Concordat* regulating the relations of Church and State.

The first dispute was about the method of appointing bishops. The Concordat gave to the Government the right of appointing bishops, subject to the papal ratification of the appointee's moral and theological qualifications. During the Third Republic the habit had grown up of mutual consultation before appointments were made, a practice which led the Vatican to assume that its initial influence was as great as that of the Government, and finally to make use of the formula *nobis nominavit*, or *nominaverit*, as though the Government merely proposed a candidate subject to the Vatican's free right to accept or to reject. The keen-scented Combes took an early opportunity to raise this issue by making certain



appointments to bishoprics without previously consulting the Vatican. In the midst of the discussions Leo XIII died in July, 1903, and was succeeded by Pius X, whose character was utterly different from that of his predecessor. His primitive faith saw in France the home of heretics like the Modernist, the Abbé Loisy; and his Secretary of State, the ultramontane Cardinal Merry del Val, was as hostile to France, as his predecessor Cardinal Rampolla had, on the whole, been well disposed to the "eldest daughter of the Church." Between Merry del Val and Combes no agreement was possible. So matters went from bad to worse.

In the autumn of 1903 the King of Italy made a visit to France, and in 1904 it was deemed advisable to have President Loubet return this visit to emphasize the new cordiality between France and Italy, the settlement of long-standing difficulties, and to cultivate as much as possible one member of the Triple Alliance. The Pope protested violently against this visit to his enemy in Rome and made it clear that he would refuse to see Loubet. The diplomatic crisis became acute and the French Ambassador to the Vatican was recalled.



Soon came a complete rupture over the treatment by the pontifical authorities of two French bishops, Geay of Laval and Le Nordez of Dijon. They had shown themselves loyal Republicans and had become the object of attack in their own dioceses until personal scandals were imagined or raked up against them. Combes took the part of the bishops and, to punish the Vatican for interfering with the French prelates, definitely broke off diplomatic relations in July, 1904, withdrawing even the chargé d'affaires who had been left after the departure of the ambassador.

For some time, plans for the separation of Church and State had been under discussion in a somewhat academic way by a committee or *Commission* of the Chamber, under the general guidance of Ferdinand Buisson and Aristide Briand. The latter had even drawn up a preliminary project. But Combes, in spite of his vehemence in words against the Church, hesitated to involve the Ministry. He knew that the country at large was fully satisfied with the maintenance of the Concordat and that some of his own colleagues in the Cabinet, as well as Loubet, preferred not to disturb it.

Suddenly a great scandal broke out. The enemies of the Ministry got hold of the fact that General André, through some of his subordinates in the War Office, was carrying on a regular system of espionage upon army officers suspected of luke-warm republicanism or of Clerical sympathies, and was using as spies members of Masonic lodges or even subordinate Masonic army officers throughout France.<sup>1</sup> These spies had filed innumerable notes or memoranda known as *fiches*, containing information, rumor, or scandal concerning the persons involved, their families and intimacies. The discovery that leading members of the Cabinet had been countenancing methods as reprehensible as those of the worst of their opponents, caused an uproar. The Cabinet seemed on the point of being overthrown when one of its enemies did it a great service. A wild and blatant anti-Ministerialist named Syveton rushed up to the Minister of War and struck him two blows in the face during a meeting of the Chamber. The effect of this deed was to cause a temporary reaction in favor of the

<sup>1</sup> It should be remembered that, in France, the Freemasons are an anti-religious political quite as much as a benevolent order.

Ministry, but also to draw Combes more to the Radicals, and he promptly brought forward his own governmental separation plan, which was considerably at variance with the Briand project. The respite was, however, only momentary, and, after sacrificing General André, Combes gave up the struggle and resigned in January, 1905, without being actually put in the minority.

It cannot be denied that there was a considerable deterioration in government during the régime of Combes. In attempting to thwart the Clerical Party he let himself lapse into methods as objectionable as theirs. His anti-clericalism breathed the spirit of persecution, as much as did the intrigues of the clergy during the early days of the Republic. He transformed Waldeck-Rousseau's plans for the regulation of religious orders into a measure of proscription. He countenanced underhanded intrigues, and allowed his Minister of War to undermine army discipline by his methods of political espionage almost as much as it had been undermined in the days of the supremacy of the Clericals. The concessions of the Ministers of War and of Marine to the Socialists

and pacifists considerably weakened the efficiency of both army and navy. Combes's administration was pre-eminently one of self-seeking politicians.

Yet, on the other hand, certain very praiseworthy achievements may be registered to its credit. One of these was the act of General André, in 1903, instituting a new private investigation of the Dreyfus case. It resulted in the discovery of material sufficient to justify a new demand for revision, which the Cour de Cassation admitted in March, 1904. Another achievement was the *rapprochement* with England known as the *Entente cordiale* or friendly understanding, which following the new amity with Italy greatly strengthened France face-to-face with Germany. The Russian alliance had given France one definite European ally, and the cordiality with Italy, a member of the Triple Alliance, cleared the situation in the Mediterranean and on the frontier of the Alps. The *Entente cordiale* was engineered by Edward VII as a result of his visit to Paris in 1903. The accord of April, 1904, was really due to English as well as French fear of German aggression. It liquidated all the old conten-



tions between England and France, one of which, the French Shore Dispute over Newfoundland fishing rights, dated back to the Treaty of Utrecht in the early eighteenth century. But, above all, France definitely gave up her Egyptian claims in return for freedom of action in Morocco guaranteed by England. For France was anxious to add Morocco to her African sphere of influence. A secret arrangement with Spain gave that country reversionary claims to certain parts of Morocco. By the agreement with England the bad blood caused by the Fashoda incident was wiped away, a new intimacy sprang up between "Perfidious Albion" and "Froggy," and through the natural drawing together of England and France's ally Russia, the Triple Entente came into being some years later, which was destined to face Germany and Austria in the Great European War.

Combes's successor as Prime Minister was a member of his own Cabinet, Maurice Rouvier. More moderate in views than Combes, he would have been content to let the Separation bill rest, but the Radicals were in the saddle and he let things take their course. The dis-



cussions over the project went on through most of the year 1905, under the guidance of the Minister of Worship, Bienvenu-Martin, and particularly of Aristide Briand, the *rapporteur* or spokesman for the *Commission* in the Chamber. The bill, again and again modified in a spirit of conciliation and leniency under the guidance of Briand, finally resulted, as promulgated on December 9, in a sincere effort for a compromise between different views on religion. It showed a desire, since Church and State were to be divorced, to treat the former fairly. Provision was made, when the budget for religious purposes should be suppressed, for the legal inventory of ecclesiastical property, the pension of superannuated clergy, and the formation of legal corporations to insure public worship (*associations cultuelles*). It must be remembered that the new measure applied quite as much to the Protestants and to the Jews as to the Catholics. Before the separation the Protestant pastors and the Jewish rabbis were maintained by the State no less than the Catholic clergy. Their numerical insignificance made them of little importance in the general combat over the Clerical question. Nor could

they fairly be accused of intrigue against the Republic.

The year 1905 is noteworthy for two other important events. One was the reduction of the term of compulsory military service from three to two years. This measure was carried through largely under the auspices of General André and proved an over-dangerous concession to the anti-militarists and pacifists, since it was destined so soon to be repealed. The other was the sensational diplomatic dispute with Germany over Morocco, which resulted at first for France in a worse humiliation than Fashoda.

Germany under Bismarck had encouraged the numerous French colonial schemes, as a way of keeping her busy abroad and of diverting her thoughts from Alsace-Lorraine. But as the Empire began to develop its Pan-Germanism and its aspirations to world-power under William II, it grew jealous of England and France and of their arrangement of 1904 to settle the interests of Morocco. Forthwith Germany began to intrigue with the Sultan of Morocco against the French, and declared that, as it had not been officially informed of

the agreements between England, France, and Spain, it intended to disregard them. The defeat of Russia by Japan, in particular, encouraged Germany to feel that France, deprived of its ally, could be bullied with impunity. On March 31, Emperor William landed at Tangier and proclaimed that his visit was to the Sultan as an "independent sovereign." Germany also called for the convocation of an international meeting to regulate the Moroccan question. The French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Delcassé, objected to the thwarting of his plans, but because of the deterioration of the army and navy and the lack of hoped-for Russian support, Rouvier was obliged under German threats to drop him from his Cabinet and to agree to the convocation of the Conference of Algeciras.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The pro-German position, expressed in such works as E. D. Morel's *Morocco in Diplomacy* (1912), is that Sir Edward Grey and M. Delcassé were engaged in tricky schemes to dispose of Morocco without regard for German interests; that Germany was not officially notified by France of the public agreements with England (April, 1904) and with Spain (October, 1904); that these two agreements were both accompanied by secret ones which nullified their effect; that M. Delcassé resigned, not under German pressure, but at M. Rouvier's wish, for having unduly involved and compromised France.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE ADMINISTRATION OF ARMAND FALLIÈRES

February, 1906, to February, 1913

THE international conference for the regulation of the Moroccan question met at Algeciras in southern Spain, in January, 1906. Twelve powers participated, including the United States. The negotiations were prolonged until the end of March owing to the unconciliatory German attitude, and resulted in an arrangement which the Germans looked upon as totally unsatisfactory to themselves. In the shaping of the general results the United States had considerable influence. The agreement put out of discussion the sovereignty of the Sultan, the integrity of the empire, and the principle of commercial freedom, and was largely devoted to the question of the establishment of a state bank and the organization of the police in international ports of entry. In the bank France was to have special privileges, and the police was to be under the supervision of France and Spain. Germany was eliminated.



In the midst of the uncertainty over the outcome of the Conference two important events took place in France, the second of which came near seriously weakening the French position. These were the election of a successor to President Loubet and the downfall of the Rouvier Ministry.

M. Loubet's term expired in February and he did not desire re-election. The two chief candidates were Armand Fallières and Paul Doumer. M. Fallières was an easy-going, good-natured, and well-meaning but second-rate statesman. Doumer was far more brilliant and vigorous, but was accused of self-seeking and was thought a less safe person to elect. Unfortunately, M. Fallières, when chosen, had his master, and was largely under the control of Clemenceau.

Meanwhile the almost unprincipled vacillation of M. Rouvier and his spineless policy caused increased dissatisfaction to the Chamber. During the discussion of a riotous episode connected with the enforcement of the Separation law, which had resulted in the death of a man, Rouvier was overthrown. He was succeeded by a colorless person, Sarrien, who in-



cluded Clemenceau in his Cabinet as Minister of the Interior. The latter gradually pushed his chief aside and finally replaced him before the end of the year as Prime Minister.

Clemenceau showed himself during his lengthy control of power an astute politician. In the public eye ever since the days of the Commune, he had had success during the eighties as a destroyer of cabinets. Driven into the background by the Panama scandals, he now came forward again to try his fortune in holding the power from which he had often driven others. With a Cabinet thoroughly under his dictatorial control, he announced a programme which was to depend for success on the Radicals, rather than on the Moderates or the Socialists. It was a departure from the policy of the *Bloc*, though to conciliate the advanced parties he created the new Ministry of Labor and put M. Viviani, a Socialist, in charge of it. In practice, Clemenceau's policy was that of one determined to stay in office, showing alternately conciliation and severity, explaining his actions to the Chamber often with a flippancy which seemed out of place and did not help the prestige of parliamentary government.

Apart from the diplomatic tension with Germany, which was not settled by the Act of Algeciras, the history of the Fallières Administration is largely taken up with the final disposition of the religious controversy and with labor questions. The constant advance toward radicalism and socialism, the lack of great statesmen in Parliament and the presence of professional politicians, the progress of anti-militarism and the relegation of the question of Alsace-Lorraine to the background, left a free field for the growth of social unrest. The tendency was encouraged by the elections for the renewal of the Chamber of Deputies in May, 1906. To the religious disturbances and the efforts of the Conservatives to prove themselves persecuted, the country answered at the polls by an increased anti-Clerical majority.

In 1906 the Dreyfus case was at last settled. The Cour de Cassation finally annulled the verdict of the Rennes court-martial. In consequence Dreyfus was restored to the army with the rank of Major which he would normally have reached had it not been for his great ordeal. Colonel Picquart, to whom more than to any one he owed his rehabilitation, who

had been driven from the army in 1898, was now made Brigadier-General. Promoted a few weeks later to Major-General, he became Minister of War in Clemenceau's Cabinet. The remains of Emile Zola were also transferred to the Pantheon. Such were the dramatic changes wrought in half a dozen years.

The troubles over the application of the law for the disestablishment of the Church lasted more than two years. The Vatican was determined to make itself a martyr. It would undoubtedly have been glad to see a forcible closing of the churches in order to cause a reaction in its favor. Moreover, it objected to the diminution of priestly power and the participation of the laity as prescribed in the formation of the new *associations cultuelles*. The Ministry, and particularly Briand, were just as determined not to give it an opportunity to raise the cry of persecution.

The first opportunity for a conflict came when the Government tried to make inventories of religious property, including valuables. This measure was for the protection of the Church, but the Clericals chose to call it inquisitorial and a first step to confiscation.

In some parts of France armed resistance, often systematically prepared, was made to the authorities, army officers again occasionally refused to carry out orders, and on March 6, at Boeschepe, a man was killed. It was this incident which caused the downfall of the Rouvier Cabinet.

It was the policy of M. Briand, entrusted with the application of the new law, to employ the most conciliatory means face to face with the Vatican, determined to be persecuted. As a matter of fact the French bishops, after plenary consultation, had decided by a considerable majority, to accept the law in a good spirit, with reservations as to its justice, and to organize the *associations cultuelles*. Suddenly the Pope intervened by an encyclical directed against any such acceptance, and prescribed a continuation of the contest. These orders the bishops felt constrained to obey.

Therefore, at the advent of the Clemenceau Cabinet in October, 1906, M. Briand had achieved nothing but compulsory inventories. He got Parliament to allow the legality of the proposed religious organizations under the Associations Law of 1901 or under the general



law of 1881 on public meetings, as well as under the special legislation of 1905. Again the Holy See refused to obey, and ordered the clergy to continue their occupancy of the churches, but to refrain from any legal declaration or registration whatsoever. Then M. Briand did away with the declaration. So the contest went on without agreement until it finally lapsed. The clergy continued to occupy the churches, but without legal claim to them, under the law of 1881 on public meetings, amended by the law of March 28, 1907, suppressing the formality of a declaration. The Catholic Church was stripped, by its own unwillingness to help organize holding bodies, of all its possessions. By the good-will of the Government it continued to occupy the religious edifices, but the maintenance and repair of these was dependent on the good-will of the *commune* or administrative division in which the churches were situated. On the other hand, nothing has materialized of the prophesied religious persecutions, civil war, and martyrdoms.

Apart from the annoyances caused by the separation of Church and State, the history of the Clemenceau Ministry deals largely with



labor disturbances and social unrest. This was partly due to parliamentary demagoguery. A succession of weak and ineffective ministries had been followed by Clemenceau's incoherencies and alterations of policy, though it remained consistently *Radical* and not socialistic. The Ministers were often at loggerheads (even Clemenceau and Briand over the Separation bill), and the Deputies were often mediocre politicians, quick to vote themselves an increase of salary, but dilatory in other achievements. The growth of socialism, with its theories of pacifism and international brotherhood, encouraged the anti-militarists. The brilliant leader Jaurès openly advocated the abolition of the army and the creation of a national militia. Some anti-militarists, like Hervé, carried their theories beyond all bounds and rhetorically talked of dragging the national flag in the mire. Meanwhile the political methods in the past of men like André in the War Department and Camille Pelletan in the Navy had weakened those services, as Delcassé had found to his cost in the controversy with Germany. The battleship *Iéna* blew up in March, 1907, there was a suspicious fire at

the Toulon Arsenal, and many other things disquieted people.

The Government tried to cater to the labor parties, brought forward plans for an income tax and for old-age pensions, and carried through a law making compulsory one day of rest out of seven for workingmen. Especially active were the efforts of the syndicalists and the organizers of the anarchistic *Confédération générale du travail*, or "C.G.T.," to promote every contest between capital and labor and to bring about, if possible, a general strike of all labor. There were strikes of miners, longshoremen, sailors, electricians among others. Even more alarming was the formation of unions, affiliated with the C.G.T., among state employees such as school teachers and postmen, and efforts to disorganize the public service. These different movements Clemenceau met with his customary seesaw of friendliness and harshness, and the Government was usually victorious. Not less troublesome but somewhat more picturesque was the quasi-revolutionary movement, in 1907, of the wine-makers of the South, driven to desperation by overproduction and low prices, attributed to the

competition of adulterated wines. The municipalities where these disturbances occurred were often in sympathy with the creators of disturbance, not only in small towns, but in large places like Béziers, Perpignan, Narbonne, and Carcassonne. Municipal officials resigned or refused to carry out their duties, and some regiments, made up of men recruited from one of the districts, mutinied. The troubles at last quieted down.

In the beginning of 1909 an important agreement was signed with Germany which seemed to promise an end to the long disputes over Morocco. The Moroccan question had continued to dominate French foreign policy even after Algeciras and that conference had not ended the commercial rivalries of the two countries. In March, 1907, a Frenchman, Dr. Mauchamp, was murdered by natives at Marrakesh and the French in reply occupied Ujda near the Algerian frontier. In July, after the murder of some European workmen at Casablanca, the French sent a landing corps. In 1908 the Sultan Abd-el-Aziz, a friend of the French, was overthrown by a rival, Muley-Hafid, egged on by the Germans. These also

raised a dispute over some deserters from the French Foreign Legion at Casablanca, who had taken refuge at the German Consulate and whom the Germans claimed as their subjects. For a moment war clouds seemed to appear on the horizon until dissipated by mutual expressions of regret and after a reference to the Hague Tribunal, which, on the whole, justified the French. It was, therefore, good news for Europe to hear of the agreement of February, 1909, which acknowledged the predominance of French political claims, and tried to facilitate economic co-operation instead of rivalry between France and Germany. Unfortunately, this agreement was destined to prove ineffective.

The Clemenceau Cabinet lasted until July, 1909. During a discussion on the Navy, Clemenceau and Delcassé had an altercation as to their relative responsibilities for the French surrender to Germany in 1905 when Delcassé was driven from the Rouvier Ministry. The Chamber sided with Delcassé and Clemenceau discovered that his sarcasm had overreached itself. The new Premier was Briand, the Socialist and former bugbear of the moneyed



classes, who had shown by his management of the Separation bill the abilities of a true statesman and who became more and more moderate in his views under the increasing responsibilities of power.

The history of the Briand Ministry was largely taken up by internal questions and the elections of May, 1910, for the renewal of the Chamber of Deputies. To propitiate the electorate the expiring Parliament passed a law providing old-age pensions for workingmen. The elections left the Radicals and the Socialistic Radicals (as opposed to the Socialists) on the whole masters of the situation, but the general parliamentary instability continued to prevail. The country felt the reaction. In the autumn of 1910 far-reaching railway strikes broke out, resulting in violence and injury to railway property or *sabotage*. Briand met the difficulty energetically by mobilizing the employees still subject to military duty, and making them perform their work under military orders. The act of "dictatorship" was approved by the Chamber, but Briand went through the ceremony of resigning and accepting the mission to form a new Cabinet. It



proved not very homogeneous and withdrew in February, 1911. The Monis Cabinet, of more advanced Socialistic-Radical principles, lasted only a few months and faced new disturbances with wine-producers. This time the trouble was in the East, where many were dissatisfied with the artificial limitation of districts entitled to produce wines labelled "champagne." The Socialistic-Radical Ministry of Joseph Caillaux (June, 1911) encountered a new and dangerous crisis in the relations with Germany.

The mutual agreement between the two countries for the economic development of Morocco had, through financial rivalries, not worked well. There was also friction over similar attempts for the development of the French Congo. In this state of affairs, the French sent a military expedition to Fez in the early summer of 1911 for the ostensible purpose of protecting the Sultan from attack by rebels and of relieving the French military mission. The Germans, backed up, indeed, by the French anti-militarist press, declared that this was a mere pretext for encroachment. Spain also took the opportunity of asserting

its rights to parts of the North in accordance with its reversionary claims by the Treaty of 1904. Thereupon Germany declared that the agreements of Algeciras and of 1909 had been nullified by France and demanded compensations. The gunboat *Panther* suddenly appeared in the port of Agadir (July 1) and the Germans began to call for their share in the partition of Morocco.

Difficult negotiations were carried on between France and Germany through the summer of 1911, and at moments the two countries were on the very brink of war. The English Government backed up France. Lloyd George and Premier Asquith made public declarations to that effect. French capitalists also began calling in their funds invested in Germany and a financial crisis threatened that country.

Thus brought to terms the Germans became more moderate in their demands, and it was finally possible to reach a compromise, unsatisfactory to both parties. Germany definitely gave up all political claim to Morocco and acknowledged France as paramount there. On the other hand, a territorial readjustment

was made in the Congo by which Germany added to the Cameroons about two hundred and thirty thousand square kilometres of land with a million people, and the new frontiers made annoying salients into the French Congo. The treaty was signed in November, 1911, but the Pan-Germanists were angry at any concessions to France, the Colonial Minister resigned, and the Emperor, who had thrown his influence on the side of peace, lost much prestige for a while. On the other hand, the French were correspondingly dissatisfied at the losses in the Congo. The opponents of the Prime Minister, Caillaux, had often taunted him with too close a relation between his official acts and his private financial interests. They now accused him of tricky concessions to Germany in connection with the Congo adjustments. M. Caillaux denied in the Chamber that he had ever entered into any private dealings apart from the negotiations of the ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, Clemenceau asked the Foreign Minister, M. de Selves, point-blank if the French Ambassador at Berlin had not complained of interference in the diplomatic negotiations. M. de Selves refused to answer,

thus implicitly giving the lie to M. Caillaux. The consequence was a cabinet crisis and the resignation of the Ministry (January, 1912).

The upshot of the Agadir crisis was increased irritation between France and Germany and the feeling in each country that the other was seeking trouble. The French were now convinced that, some day or other, war would inevitably result and the nation dropped its strong pacifist tendencies and rallied to the army. The Germans were, above all, furious against the English, whom they considered responsible for their humiliation.

So far as Morocco was immediately concerned, the French took steps to develop their new privileges. In March, 1912, they imposed a definite protectorate on the Sultan Muley-Hafid and soon replaced him by his brother Muley-Yussef. They came to an agreement with Spain as to the latter's claims in the North and entrusted to General Lyautey the administrative and military reorganization of the country. The pacification of the hostile tribes was not an easy task and went on laboriously through 1912 and 1913.

After the downfall of M. Caillaux, Raymond



Poincaré became head of a Cabinet more moderate than its predecessor, the Socialistic Radicals seeming somewhat discredited in public opinion. M. Poincaré was a strong partisan of proportional representation, and a measure for the modification of the method of voting was, under his auspices, passed by the Chamber, though it failed the following year in the Senate.

In foreign affairs, Morocco having dropped into the background, the Eastern question became acute. Fear lest the conflict in the Orient should involve the rest of Europe led France to draw again closer to Russia and England.



## CHAPTER X

### THE ADMINISTRATION OF RAYMOND POINCARÉ February, 1913

M. FALLIERES' term expired on February 18, 1913. The two leading candidates were Raymond Poincaré, head of the Ministry, and Jules Pams, who was supported by the advanced Radicals. M. Poincaré's election was looked upon, because of his personal vigor, as a triumph of sound conservative republicanism, and it was predicted that he would prove a strong leader, able to give prestige to the Presidency and to bring order out of chaos. The early months of his Administration were less productive of results than had been hoped, but the European War came too soon to make definitive judgment safe.

After M. Poincaré's election, M. Fallières made M. Briand President of the Council during the last weeks of his term, and M. Poincaré kept the same Cabinet. M. Briand, like M. Poincaré, advocated proportional representation. As the Chamber failed to take a

vigorous position in support of the measure, and defeated the Ministry on a vote of confidence, the latter withdrew (March, 1913).

Louis Barthou next became Prime Minister, and the important legislative measure of the year was the new military law. The Germans having largely increased their army, it was deemed necessary, in spite of the violent opposition of the Socialistic Radicals and the Socialists and the attempts of the syndicalists of the *Confédération générale du travail* to work up a general strike, to abrogate the Law of 1905 and to return to three years of military service without exemption. M. Barthou pushed the three-years bill already supported by the Briand Cabinet. France took upon herself an enormous financial burden, coupled with a corresponding loss of productive labor, yet events soon proved the wisdom of the step.

The opposition to the Cabinet was virulent. There were now two great groupings of the chief political parties.<sup>1</sup> The Radicals and

<sup>1</sup> It must be obvious to the reader, after following all the changes in nomenclature recorded in this volume, that in France party-names give little hint of party-views: "In French political parlance 'Progressivists' are retrograde, 'Liberals' are conservative, 'Conservatives' are revolutionary in aim and methods, 'Radicals' are trimmers and time-servers, whilst one of the most reactionary

Socialistic Radicals, under the name of "Unified Radicals" waged war against the President and the Ministry. They were under the inspiration of men like Clemenceau and the active leadership of Joseph Caillaux and tried to revive the methods of the old *Bloc* of Combes. They declared their intention of repealing the three-years law and proclaimed the tenets of their faith at the Congress of Pau. The Briand-Barthou-Millerand group, supporters of Poincaré, soon formed a Moderate Party with a programme of conciliation and reform known as the "Federation of the Lefts."

The Barthou Cabinet had been overthrown early in December, 1913, after a vote on a government loan. President Poincaré had to call in a Radical Cabinet led by Gaston Doumergue, the programme of which Ministry was,

administrations of recent years was hedged by three 'Socialists.' " A.-L. Guérard in *Pub. Mod. Lang. Assoc. of America*, vol. xxx, p. 624. Compare also the following: "Suivant les régions de la France, c'est-à-dire selon la moyenne de l'opinion locale et les termes de comparaison ou les traditions propres à chaque province, les mots changent de signification. Dans le Var un radical passe pour un modéré, dans l'ouest un républicain est considéré par certains comme un révolutionnaire, ailleurs les candidats qui ne sont pas au moins radicaux-socialistes ne sont pas tenus pour de bons républicains." L. Jacques, *Les partis politiques sous la troisième république*, p. 429.

after all, less "advanced" than the Pau programme, especially as to the three-years bill. M. Caillaux, the master-spirit of the Radicals, was the Minister of Finance and the object of the hostility of the Moderates. They claimed that he used his position to cause speculation at the Stock Exchange, and accused him of "selling out" to Germany in the settlement after Agadir. The *Figaro*, edited by Gaston Calmette, began a violent campaign. Among the charges was that during the prosecution in 1911 of Rochette, a swindling promoter, the then Prime Minister Monis, now Minister of Marine, had, at Caillaux's instigation, held up the prosecution for fraud, during which delay Rochette had been able to put through other swindles.

In the midst of the public turmoil over these charges Caillaux's wife went to Calmette's editorial offices and killed him with a revolver. Caillaux resigned and, the Rochette case having come up for discussion in the Chamber, when Monis denied that he had ever influenced the law, Barthou produced a most damaging letter. A parliamentary commission later decided that the Monis Cabinet



*had* interfered to save Rochette from prosecution.

It was under such circumstances that the Deputies separated for the general elections. Three chief questions came before the voters, the three-years law, the income tax, and proportional representation. The results of the elections were inconclusive and the new Chamber promised to be as ineffective as its predecessor. On the second ballots the Socialists made a good many gains.

The Doumergue Ministry resigned soon after the elections which it had carried through. President Poincaré offered the leadership to the veteran statesman Ribot, who with the co-operation of Léon Bourgeois, formed a Moderate Cabinet with an inclination toward the Left. This Ministry was above the average, but its leaders were insulted and browbeaten and overthrown on the very first day they met the Chamber of Deputies. So then a Cabinet was formed, led by the Socialist René Viviani, who was willing, however, to accept the three-years law, though he had previously opposed it. But this victory for national defence was weakened by parlia-



mentary revelations of military unpreparedness.

In mid-July President Poincaré and M. Viviani left France for a round of state visits to Russia and Scandinavia. Paris was engrossed by the sensational trial of Madame Caillaux, which resulted in her acquittal, but this excitement was suddenly replaced by the European crisis, and President Poincaré cut short his foreign trip and hastened home. France loyally supported her ally Russia, and, on August 3, Baron von Schoen, the German Ambassador, notified M. Viviani of a state of war between Germany and France.

Indeed, no sooner had the Moroccan question been settled than danger had loomed in the Orient, in which France was likely to be involved through her alliance with Russia. Moreover, Germany had not got over the Agadir fiasco and was furious with England as well as France. Thus the European balance of power had long been in danger through the hostility of the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente. It is beyond the scope of the present volume to analyze in detail the Balkan question. The rôle of France was consistent in the

interest of peace by helping to maintain the balance of power, but obviously she was loyal toward her partners of the Triple Entente and acted in solidarity with them.

So far as the outbreak of the war in 1914 is concerned, France stands with a clear conscience. She had nothing to do with the disputes between Austria and Serbia, or between Austria, Germany, and Russia. Once war proved inevitable France faithfully accepted the responsibilities of the Russian alliance. Against France, Germany was an open aggressor. Germany's strategic plans for the quick annihilation of France, before attacking Russia, are well known to the world. Everybody is aware how scrupulously France avoided every hostile measure, and, during the critical days preceding the war, withdrew all troops ten kilometres from the frontier to prevent a clash. The Germans were obliged, in order to justify their advance, to invent preposterous tales of bombs dropped by aeroplanes near Nuremberg or of the violation of Belgium neutrality by French officers in automobiles. France had no idea of invading Belgium. All the French strategic plans aimed at the protec-

tion of the direct frontier, and they were dislocated by the dishonest move of Germany through Belgium.

In 1914 France was not even prepared for war. The pacification of Morocco immobilized thousands of her troops. Revelations in Parliament as late as July 13 showed, as mentioned above, great deficiencies in equipment. Public attention was taken up by the Caillaux trial and by political strife apparently reaching the proportions of national weakness.

Since Agadir it is true that France, conscious of the constantly provocative attitude of Germany, had seen the folly of plans for disarmament. Love for the army had grown again, through realization of its necessity. But no nation ever looked forward with more horror and dread to military conflict than the French. They had been the last victims of a great European war, of which the memories were still alive. However much the loss of Alsace-Lorraine rankled in their hearts, they knew too well the madness of war to seek it again. A new generation had grown up reconciled to fate and willing to let bygones be bygones.

But Germany would not. The new Empire, a *Bourgeois gentilhomme* among nations, but without even the breeding of the *parvenu*, dreamed of world-supremacy. As the boor in society makes himself conspicuous, so it was one of the tenets of Pan-Germanism to let no international agreement take place without German interference.

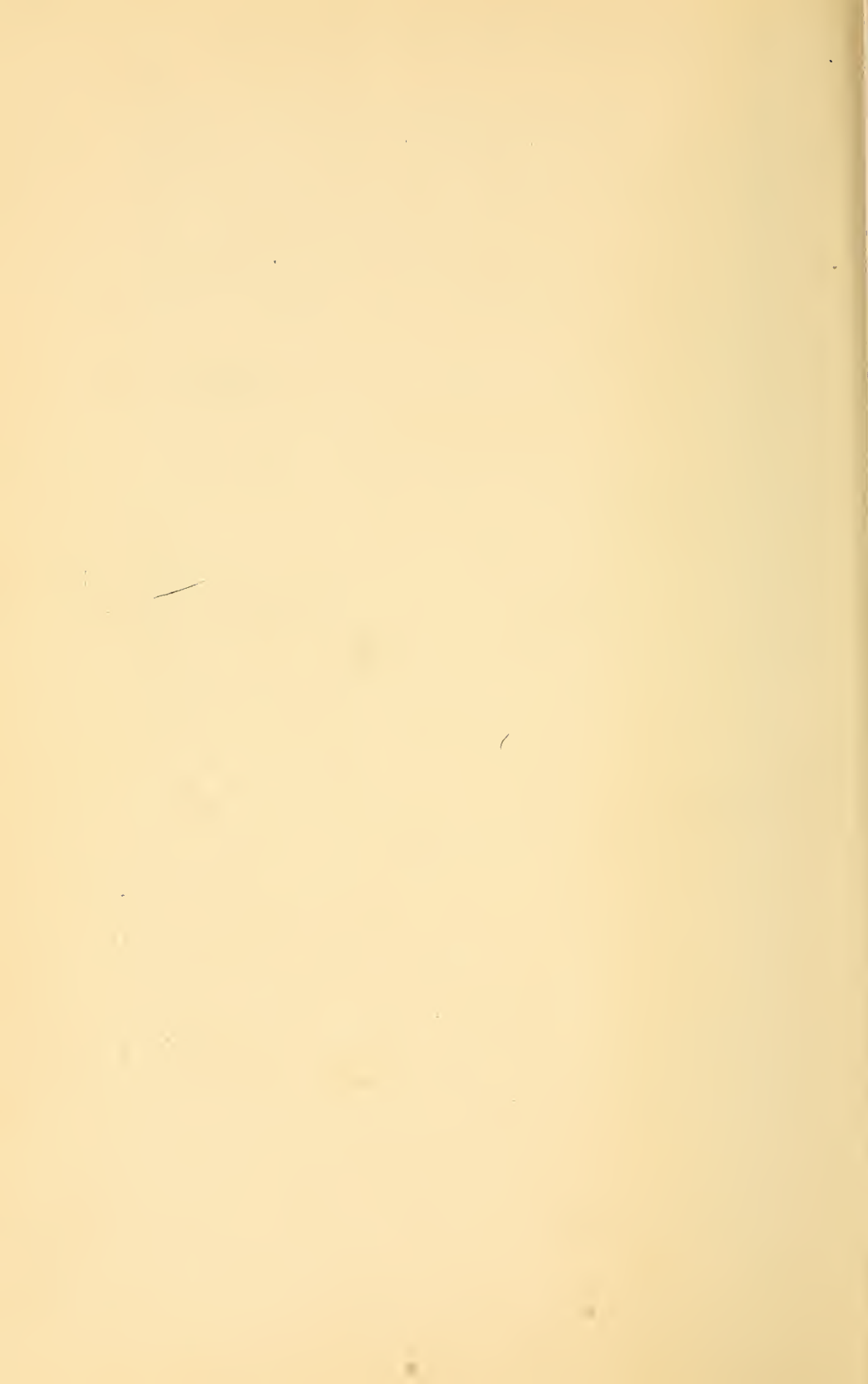
Some people, reading the annals of forty-four years since the Franco-Prussian War, have been disposed to sneer at France. Some have called the country degenerate because of its small birth-rate, its fiction sometimes brutal, sometimes neurotic, its inefficient Parliament, its vindictive political and religious contests. Such critics should remember that the French Government is the result of tactical compromise in presence of the Monarchical Party. Nobody denies that it might be improved. As to religious persecution, Americans might remember their own righteous feelings toward fellow citizens with "hyphenated" allegiance, when they rebuke the French for fighting vast organizations working against their Government under foreign orders.



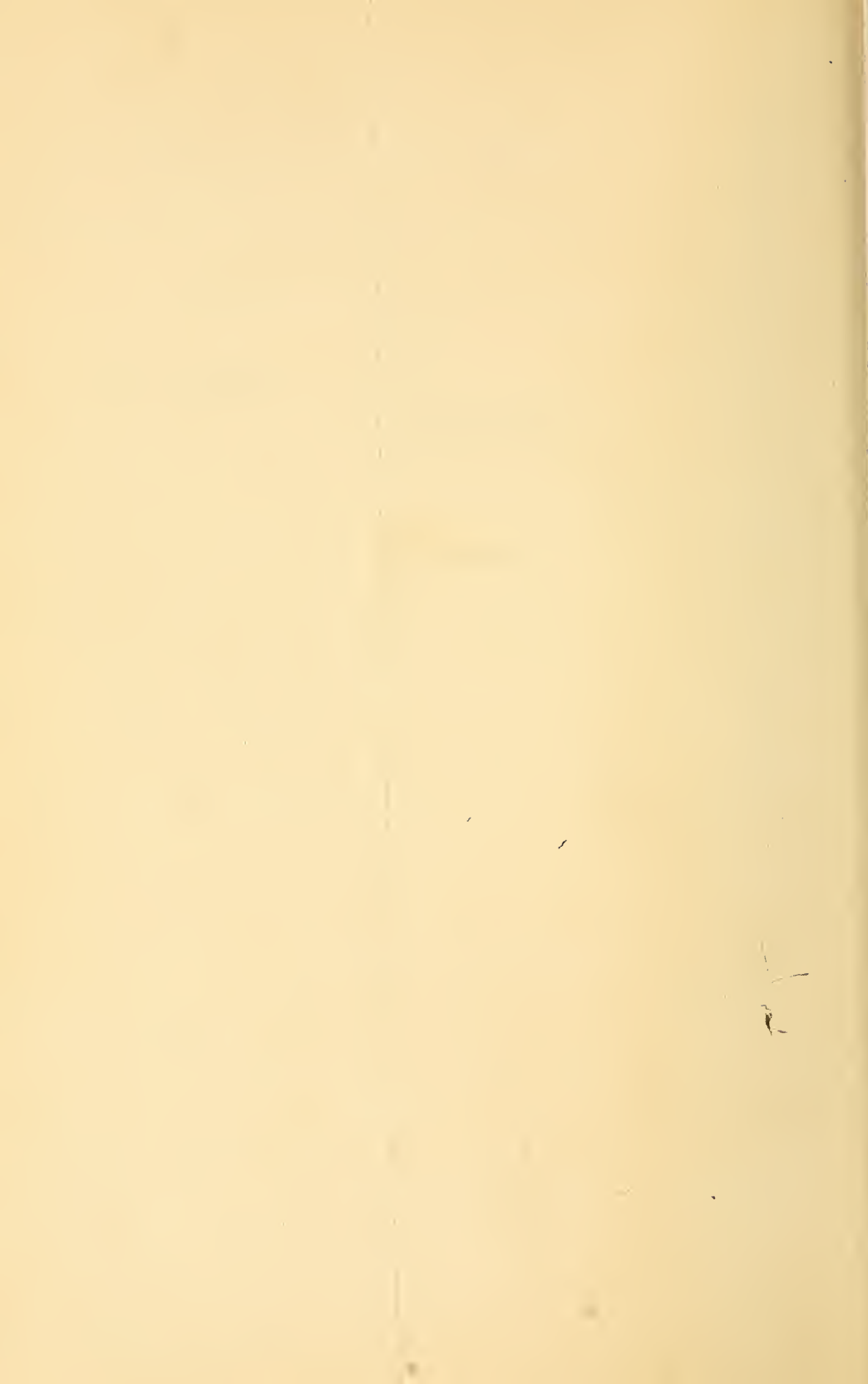
In 1914 France, bearing on her shoulders proportionably the greatest burden of all the Allies, presented to the world a spirit of firmness, unity, and national resolve that won the admiration of neutral nations. Religious persecution and clerical manceuvre were alike put aside. France forgot all lassitude and discouragement. Atheist, Protestant, and Catholic felt a great wave of spiritual as well as of patriotic fervor, and took as symbol of love of country the heroic peasant girl of Lorraine, Jeanne d'Arc, who, coming from the people and leading the nation's army, sought to drive from the soil its foes and invaders.

THE END





## APPENDIX



## APPENDIX

### PRESIDING OFFICERS OF FRENCH CABINETS

#### VICE-PRÉSIDENTS DU CONSEIL

##### *Administration of Thiers*

Feb. 19, 1871, Jules Dufaure.

May 18, 1873, Jules Dufaure.

##### *Administration of Mac-Mahon*

May 25, 1873, Duc de Broglie.

Nov. 26, 1873, Duc de Broglie.

May 22, 1874, Général de Cissey.

March 10, 1875, { Louis Buffet.  
                          { Jules Dufaure.

#### PRÉSIDENTS DU CONSEIL

##### *Administration of Mac-Mahon (continued)*

March 9, 1876, Jules Dufaure.

Dec. 12, 1876, Jules Simon.

May 17, 1877, Duc de Broglie.

Nov. 23, 1877, Général de Rochebouët.

Dec. 13, 1877, Jules Dufaure.

##### *Administration of Jules Grévy*

Feb. 4, 1879, William-Henry Waddington.

Dec. 28, 1879, Charles de Freycinet.

Sept. 23, 1880, Jules Ferry.

Nov. 14, 1881, Léon Gambetta.

Jan. 30, 1882, Charles de Freycinet.

- Aug. 7, 1882, Eugène Duclerc.  
Jan. 29, 1883, Armand Fallières.  
Feb. 21, 1883, Jules Ferry.  
April 6, 1885, Henri Brisson.  
Jan. 7, 1886, Charles de Freycinet.  
Dec. 11, 1886, René Goblet.  
May 30, 1887, Maurice Rouvier.

*Administration of Carnot*

- Dec. 12, 1887, Pierre-Emmanuel Tirard.  
April 3, 1888, Charles Floquet.  
Feb. 22, 1889, Pierre-Emmanuel Tirard.  
March 17, 1890, Charles de Freycinet.  
Feb. 27, 1892, Emile Loubet.  
Dec. 6, 1892, Alexandre Ribot.  
Jan. 11, 1893, Alexandre Ribot.  
April 4, 1893, Charles Dupuy.  
Dec. 3, 1893, Jean Casimir-Perier.  
May 30, 1894, Charles Dupuy.

*Administration of Casimir-Perier*

- July 1, 1894, Charles Dupuy.

*Administration of Félix Faure*

- Jan. 26, 1895, Alexandre Ribot.  
Nov. 1, 1895, Léon Bourgeois.  
April 29, 1896, Jules Méline.  
June 28, 1898, Henri Brisson.  
Nov. 1, 1898, Charles Dupuy.

*Administration of Emile Loubet*

- Feb. 18, 1899, Charles Dupuy.  
June 22, 1899, René Waldeck-Rousseau.  
June 7, 1902, Emile Combes.  
Jan. 24, 1905, Maurice Rouvier.



*Administration of Armand Fallières*

- Feb. 18, 1906, Maurice Rouvier.  
March 14, 1906, Ferdinand Sarrien.  
Oct. 25, 1906, Georges Clemenceau.  
July 23, 1909, Aristide Briand.  
March 2, 1911, Ernest Monis.  
July 27, 1911, Joseph Caillaux.  
Jan. 13, 1912, Raymond Poincaré.  
Jan. 21, 1913, Aristide Briand.

*Administration of Raymond Poincaré*

- Feb. 18, 1913, Aristide Briand.  
March 21, 1913, Louis Barthou.  
Dec. 2, 1913, Gaston Doumergue.  
June 9, 1914, Alexandre Ribot.  
June 13, 1914, René Viviani.  
Aug. 26, 1914, René Viviani.  
Oct. 29, 1915, Aristide Briand.



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